



NAVY NEWS

JULY 2015

KNIGHT VISION

● ROYAL Navy pilot Cdr Ian Tidball manoeuvres his F-35B ahead of a hot-pit refuel at Edwards Air Force Base in California, where 17(R) Squadron – known as the Black Knights – are about to begin operational testing of the strike fighter destined to fly from the Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers. See pages 3, 4, 5 and 6.
Picture: LA(Phot) Keith Morgan



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● Cdr Ian Tidball prepares for a flight in BK-2 at Edwards Air Force Base in California where 17(Reserve) Squadron are on the verge of starting operational testing on the aircraft

Pictures: LA(Phot) Keith Morgan

Milestones passed on road to equipping nation's carriers with jets Force to be reckoned with

MORE than 5,000 miles away from HMS Queen Elizabeth, a squadron of Royal Navy and RAF pioneers are ramping up work on bringing the F-35B Lightning II into service. Lorraine Proudlock joined them at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

Several United States F-16s scream in low for simulated landings before rising into the expansive desert sky.

A DC-10 tanker takes off, as do two United States Marine Corps F-35Bs.

An F-22 Raptor follows. Next is an aircraft bearing the NASA logo – the organisation's 'Frankenstein' F-18.

Waiting patiently is Royal Navy pilot Cdr Ian Tidball in his F-35B, BK-2 – Black Knight 2.

This is rush hour on Runway 22 Left at Edwards Air Force Base.

A T38 Talon jet trainer lands and it is now the RN pilot's turn. He turns right on to the runway and the lift fan door on the top of the aircraft rises 65 degrees. The roar gets louder and he's off, less than 1,000ft along the runway and the Lightning II rises level with Checkpoint 1741 – another successful short take-off for the UK is in the bag as the UK's F-35 Lightning II programme ramps up in the USA.

The seasoned pilot is executive officer on 17(R) Squadron, which

comprises around 70 RN and RAF personnel. The squadron – which its commanding officer Wg Cdr James Beck refers to as the Lightning Force – stood up at Edwards earlier this year with personnel arriving from Eglin in Florida, Patuxent River in Maryland and the UK.

But it was the Royal Navy man who made history for the squadron earlier this year when he edged out the Netherlands in the 'race' to be the first country outside of the USA to fly the joint strike fighter under his own nation's rules – by a mere 20 seconds, becoming his best moment with the programme so far.

"I was just the lucky guy that got to fly," he said with great understatement.

"What that actually represented was years and months of hard, dedicated work by the team, not just here at Edwards but also back in the UK, that finally led to the UK maintaining and operating its own F-35 aircraft.

"We were the first nation to do that and go flying and I think that was a real milestone for the programme and the UK."



● Cdr Ian Tidball and his commanding officer Wg Cdr James Beck in front of BK-2 at Edwards

Cdr Tidball was recently promoted and will take command of 17 Squadron in two years' time.

"I will basically be leading the squadron through the initial operational test and evaluation phase. So the final phase prior to the aeroplane going to initial operating capability back in the UK.

"I would really hope to be flying when we put the aircraft on the carrier. I'm not sure whether

I'll quite manage that. However I think this aircraft with the HMS Queen Elizabeth will give the UK a maritime strike capability that will be unsurpassed."

Earlier Cdr Tidball emerged from a single-storey building, which serves as home for the pilots' kit – he has locker No.13.

He walked to BK-2 (BK-1 was currently under maintenance) waiting under its sunshade at Ramp 8 North, where he joined engineers in pre-flight checks,

including ensuring the engine nozzle can rotate and swivel – it is able to point directly down, up and side to side, providing thrust for vertical landings.

He then took delivery of his bespoke and very high-tech pilot's helmet.

The F-35's Helmet Mounted Display Systems provide pilots with the information they need to complete their missions. Details about airspeed, heading, altitude, targeting information

and warnings are projected on the helmet's visor, rather than on a traditional heads-up display; it's like wearing a laptop on your head.

The helmets are now taken out to the aircraft dial-a-pizza-style in foam-lined boxes (pilots used to carry them with them in a 'shopping bag' but this changed after a United States Marine Corps' pilot suffered a 'mishap' when handle snapped).

Cdr Tidball was in the air for around two hours before returning for a hot-pit refuel, which takes about 40 minutes, 16 of them refuelling, and then taking off for the second half of his flight, which involved crosswind testing.

The previous day it was Wg Cdr Beck who was at the controls as BK-2 took off from Runway 22 Left, which at 15,000ft is the longest at Edwards. The base has two other paved runways and 16 on its adjoining lakebed.

"The F-35 is a delight to fly," he said.

"The plane pretty much flies itself; the pilot asks the plane to do it and if it's safe to do so. The plane will then permit the pilot to do it.

"In particular the STOVL (short take-off, vertical landing) activity makes it incredibly easy to fly.

"The F-35 is special because it is fifth generation. That

■ Continued on page 4





● An F-35B lands on the flight deck of the USS Wasp

Buzzing about F-35 sea trials aboard the Wasp

A TEAM from 17 Squadron were off the Eastern Seaboard of the USA for sea trials involving the F-35B.

Sixteen Royal Navy and RAF personnel were onboard the USS Wasp with their American colleagues.

Six United States Marine Corps (USMC) Lightning II aircraft were onboard the Wasp to assess flight operations, maintenance support and logistical supply.

The two-week test also included demonstrating and assessing day and night flight operations in varying aircraft configurations; communications between the aircraft and ship, F-35B landing signal officer's launch and recovery software, day and night weapons loading and all aspects of supporting the aircraft while deployed at sea.

The UK's F-35 ship integration lead, Lt Cdr Neil Mathieson, said:

"By 2020, UK combat airpower will consist of Typhoon and F-35B Lightning II, a highly potent and capable mix of fourth and fifth generation fighter aircraft."

"With Typhoon already established as one of the premier multi-role fighters in the world, the F-35 brings a complementary next-generation level of survivability and lethality."

"This will ultimately provide the UK with an unprecedented level of capability in a single aircraft."

"Our Queen Elizabeth-class carriers are the largest and most

powerful warships ever built in the UK.

"They are capable of the widest range of roles, from defence diplomacy and humanitarian assistance to full combat operations, providing flexibility and choice throughout their 50-year life."

US Lt Gen Chris Bogdan, Program Executive Officer for the F-35 Lightning II Joint Program Office, said: "United Kingdom participation in the F-35 programme has been absolutely critical to our success."

"Since the beginning, UK test pilots and engineers have been fully integrated, working shoulder to shoulder with us as we deliver the F-35 to the warfighter."

USMC Lt Col Michael Dehner, the Department of the Navy F-35 Operational Test Director, said: "The UK team is involved in every facet of F-35B maintenance during operational testing."

"That includes avionics, air frames, power lines, quality assurance and flight equipment. They're going to glean valuable lessons that will be critically useful as they move from the developmental to the operational phase of F-35B integration."

Evidence and experience gained from the Wasp trials will provide the basis for future F-35B deployments as the USMC work towards their Initial Operating Capability (IOC) this summer.



● The F-35Bs underwent 18 days' of sea trials aboard the USS Wasp



■ Continued from page 3

means it is stealthy so it has low observability to enemy radars and enemy heat-seeking missiles.

"On top of that is its sensors, the way everything is fused together, the multitude of different sensors which no other combat aircraft has ever had in the past.

"It is an absolute pleasure to be leading the way out here. At 17 we are at the vanguard of test evaluation of potentially one of the last manned combat aircraft that we may ever see, and to be here at the forefront, working alongside the Americans as they develop what is going to be their core weapon system for their combat aircraft, is an absolute delight and a great, great honour for everyone serving here."

"We are flying the UK's first two F-35Bs under sovereign jurisdiction, 5,600 miles from home – on top of that eight hours time difference – so the UK public rarely get to see what we achieve day by day."

"It is incredibly important to the UK defence industry, hundreds of thousands of jobs are associated with the programme. Fifteen per cent of the aircraft was built at either Warton or Rolls-Royce and the jobs associated with that."

"That's 15 per cent across the entire programme, which will be potentially 3,000 to 3,500 aircraft."

"More importantly, for combat air, the RAF and the Royal Navy, is what this delivers to the fight – its game-changing capabilities. It just doesn't do it on its own. It empowers the Queen Elizabeth-class carriers."

Wg Cdr Beck mainly flew the Typhoon GR4 and says: "I would describe the difference between these as a Ford Cortina versus an F1 McLaren racing car. It's game-changing."

His best moment was his first flight in the Lightning II. "We don't have access to two-seat training aircraft, that's an acknowledgement of how easy it is to fly and operate. So you work up on about 30 simulators but the first time you actually strap yourself to it and get it airborne, you are on your own and there is an enormous sense of achievement when you get the gear up and are

pointing upwards – and of course the landing as well."

"We are a team of 75 – Royal Navy and Royal Air Force – which is vitally important as the aircraft is going to be the vanguard of combat air for both for potentially the next 40 years."

"We are here to one, prove it works; two, improve it for areas we think require it and three, inform the operator back in the UK so that when we come to initial operating capability in 2018, they will know how to use it, how to fight it and get the best for Defence out of this aircraft."

At 481 square miles, Edwards is the second largest US Air Force base and home to around 6,000 people. Some of 17 Squadron choose to live on the base, a couple of hours from Los Angeles, while others commute each day on Highway 14 through Antelope Valley from Lancaster and Palmdale.

Cdr Tidball, 46 this month and who has more than 210 hours of flying the F-35B under his belt, will shortly be off to MCAS Beaufort in South Carolina and MCAS Yuma in Hawaii to complete his training to enable him to vertically land the aircraft.

"It's been a dream of mine to get involved in the F-35 programme for a number of years and I've been fortunate enough that I was able to do that," he said.

"There is definitely an element of being in the right place at the right time but it's a great honour to be at the cutting edge of this developmental and operational test programme."

"Our role here is to take this aeroplane and fly operation-type missions where we can assess its capability to go out and do those combat missions, obviously in a synthetic environment and simulated environment."

"We then write reports to say how the aeroplane is performing and then, more importantly, we will report back and write documentation so that future pilots can come on to this aircraft and exploit its capabilities as best as possible."

"The F-35B is a fifth-generation fly-by-wire aircraft. It really is a leap ahead of anything else that I've ever flown. I've flown the

Sea Harrier and the F-18 Super Hornet, both of which were great aircraft. However, the technology that has gone into this, the stealth capability and the mission systems, make it without doubt unsurpassed."

It's not just the pilots who love Lightning. The same can be said of the engineers who, along with the rest of 17 Squadron, share a number of buildings at the Joint Strike Fighter Operational Test Team compound with their counterparts from the US, Netherlands and Australia.

POAET(AV) Tony Norfolk, 32, said: "It is like nothing I have worked on before, they really have reinvented the wheel."

"The F-35 is a very intelligent aircraft, it will generally tell you what is wrong with it, rather than you having to fault-find."

The weapons expert, who joined the RN in 2006, added: "It is a totally new ball game but it is very challenging and exciting to see it progress and improve."

"Working on this aircraft is an honour and I feel very privileged to be here working on this airframe and being at the forefront of technology."

POAET(AV) Norfolk, who previously worked on Sea Harriers GR7 and GR9 and Lynx Mk3 and Mk 8, is relishing life in the Senior Service.

"The Royal Navy has offered me unique opportunities – the travel is an obvious one. The training I have received in the Royal Navy I would never have got in Civvy Street. I would like to think the prospects for me in the Navy are much greater than anywhere else."

"I would really like to think I will be on HMS Queen Elizabeth. When we go to RAF Marham it would be nice to think I would be deployed to the carrier."

For SAC(T) Darren Moulton, 27, the Lightning II is the fourth aircraft he has worked on during his six years in the RAF.

"My job on a day-to-day basis entails servicing the aircraft, receive and despatch, and on top of that, when the aircraft has any avionics faults, there is a team of us who will diagnose the faults and work with Lockheed Martin

View a Royal Navy video of 17(R) and the F-35B at Edwards on the [Navy News Facebook](#) page



and BAE Systems flight service engineers.

"The aircraft is ahead of its game, it's good to work on, and the fault-finding for me, as an avionics technician, is second to none. The aircraft is full of avionics. (It actually has more than eight million lines of software code).

"I worked on the Typhoon at RAF Coningsby, there are similarities but the amount of avionics involved in this aircraft is unbelievable and the servicing and work on it is a lot more involved.

"The Americans are great fun to work with, very professional and I'm pretty sure if you asked any of the engineers if they were unsure of something they would go and ask the US Marines, Navy, Air Force and they would be more than happy to help us.

"Being an engineer in the military definitely gives you a lot more opportunities. In Civvy Street there's no way I would get a job out here. It is one of the best things you could ever do. The benefits, which the military can give you compared to Civvy Street, are second to none. I am so glad I chose to do this.

"I would love to stay out here, I would definitely like to go to Beaufort but ultimately Marham with the F-35s would be my wish and then possibly in a few years, when I get promoted, back out here with 17 Squadron."

It's not just all work for 17 Squadron. Edwards is bordered by the Tehachapi Mountains to the north, connecting the southern Sierra Nevada range with the San Emigdio Mountains to the west and the Sierra Pelona Mountains to the southwest.

Cpl Scott Warnaby, who, along with his family, moved to Edwards from Eglin, said: "The weather is better here compared to Florida. We're living in Palmdale which is nice as the base is in the middle of nowhere."

"We try to visit the beaches at the weekend. The traffic in LA is horrendous and puts you off going but we are trying to get around and see places. One of the guys was in LA and saw Sylvester Stallone and Will Ferrell, he was

well chuffed."

POAET(AV) Norfolk, who has been in the USA since February with his wife Laura, added: "We are able to see and do things we wouldn't be able to do had I not got this posting. So we have travelled a lot of the Pacific coast, the hills and mountains nearby, we have done a lot of kayaking and hope to do some kite surfing."

SAC(T) Moulton, who lives on base with wife Hollie and their two-year-old son Theo, agreed: "Life here is very good; everything you need is right on your doorstep and socially there is always something going on so it keeps the family busy and takes a bit of weight off my shoulders.

"We've done quite a lot in America since we've been here, seen a lot of beaches down in LA from Marina del Rey all the way up to Malibu. We've done Hollywood, we've been up north through the Mojave Desert, Calico ghost town, so where we are at Edwards we are in the middle of everything."

Wg Cdr Beck said: "General life out here is amazing. However the work/life balance is sometimes difficult because, as commander of the squadron, you want to be there when we are doing such exciting stuff. I don't want to miss a day and the guys here are working incredibly hard.

"However, I'm very keen as we develop, we build a base and we're comfortable with what we're doing, that the guys can look back and family welfare is vitally important to me.

"There are some amazing opportunities being based in southern California – the coast, the national parks – and I'm very keen that the guys spend time with their families because we are not on a period of operations here."

The first of the two frontline Lightning II squadrons, 617 Dambusters will stand up at MCAS Beaufort in South Carolina before transferring to RAF Marham in Norfolk, where it will be joined by 809 NAS. But elements of 17 Squadron will remain at Edwards for the life of the aircraft.

■ **Hall of fame, see page 6**

● Cdr Tidball discusses his latest flight in BK-2 with SAC(T) Darren Moulton; Right: POAET(AV) Tony Norfolk in front of BK-1



● SAC(T) Moulton tows BK-1 out of its hangar; Cdr Tidball in BK-2; Cpl Andrew Woodruff fills up BK-2 with fuel during a hot-pit refuel



Pictures: LA(Phot) Keith Morgan

17 take its place in flight hall of fame

EDWARDS Air Force Base has played a major role in the development of virtually every aircraft to enter the United States Air Force since WW2.

Now a nondescript single-story building off Rosamond Boulevard, home to the base's Air Force Flight Test Museum, has a little bit of UK aviation history.

17 (R) Squadron marked its centenary in February this year and secured its place among the momentous aviation moments recorded at the museum.

The display includes the White Ensign, RAF and Union flags beside a board of squadron battle honours, a list of squadron commanding officers and acknowledgement of the squadron's current role with the F-35B.

Edwards, which was previously known as Muroc, was renamed in honour of Capt Glen Edwards, who flew 50 missions for the USAF during WW2.

His flights in A-20 Havoc light attack bombers took place in the North African campaign and involved hazardous, low-level missions against German tanks, convoys, troop concentrations, bridges, airfields, and a variety of other tactical targets.

Capt Edwards became a test pilot in 1943 and spent much of his time at the-then Muroc Army Air Field, testing a wide variety of experimental prototype aircraft.

He died in a crash near the base involving a Northrop YB-49 flying wing in June 1948.



• Above: 17(R) TES now has its own section in the aviation museum at Edwards; Below, the Space Shuttle Columbia lands on Rogers dry lakebed at Edwards in April 1981



• Chuck Yeager



and testing the UK's fifth-generation fighter will be an exciting new chapter in the squadron's rich and proud history."

During the ceremony, personnel were treated to a WW2-era Spitfire fly-over and an F-35 fly-over to recognise the squadron's rich flying past and the squadron's

current standing up of F-35B operations out of Edwards.

"We're here to mark two things, the 100th anniversary of 17 Squadron since it was formed, and to mark the fact that the UK is now commencing organic operations of the F-35B," said Squadron Leader Frankie Bulcher, pilot with 17 Squadron.



• Old aircraft outside the museum include a Meteor, Thunderchief and an SR17 Blackbird
Pictures: LA(Phot) Keith Morgan

'Group got us out of our pyjamas'

EARTHQUAKE training, shopping online for British tea bags – and driving for more than an hour to have a cuppa and chat with a bestie.

Welcome to the world of the Service wives.

Partners and children of personnel on 17 Squadron have embraced their new lives in the American west – but it hasn't been a holiday.

At 5,600 miles away, and with an eight-hour time difference, the families united to provide the support services normally found on UK bases.

The 17(R) Families Committee offers support and events for partners, many of whom live more than an hour's drive from Edwards.

"The base is amazing with every facility you could want but it's not very accessible so we thought we would be able to do something ourselves," said Amy Beck, whose husband James is the squadron CO.

Amy, who arrived in California straight from the UK with the couple's two children, said: "It is very difficult trying to settle in.

"We have got such qualified women out here, dynamic women, including experts in childcare, an accountant, website designers, teachers, doctors, nurses and midwives for example.

"There are amazing experiences to be had here, the other weekend we camped on the beach and watched the whales migrating."

Vickie and husband POAET(M) Adrian "Ronnie" Corbett live some distance from Edwards with their ten-month-old son Edward (not named after the base, honestly).

The former police community support officer said: "You wouldn't dream of driving from Portland in Dorset to Yeovilton for a cup of tea but that is exactly what we do here."

The Corbets have an RV and spend as much time as possible touring the USA. Adrian was

previously based at Pax in Maryland and the couple reckon they have visited 26 states in the two years they have been in the US.

Vickie admits she has become a real housewife as she bakes her own bread and has joined a sewing bee.

"That's my adult time, not my mummy or wife time. There is something for everyone thanks to the Families Committee."

Rachel and husband POAET(AV) Paul Cummings drove their children from Pax to California, with their son celebrating his 13th birthday in the Grand Canyon.

"Pax is very rural and it was hard to settle in," said Rachel.

"I now feel more involved in the military here than I did in the UK and we lived on a base.

"It is amazing out here but don't forget we have left behind our families and friends. This group has got us out of our pyjamas.

"We miss our families but I wouldn't swap this for the world."

Hazel and Navy husband Paul Wennington arrived in California straight from the UK with their four young children.

"Food here has been a challenge," she said. "The first time I went to the supermarket I could have cried. The cost of food is also more expensive here. It isn't a holiday."

Many of the wives who want to work have found it difficult because of Californian employment rules requiring workers to speak Spanish.

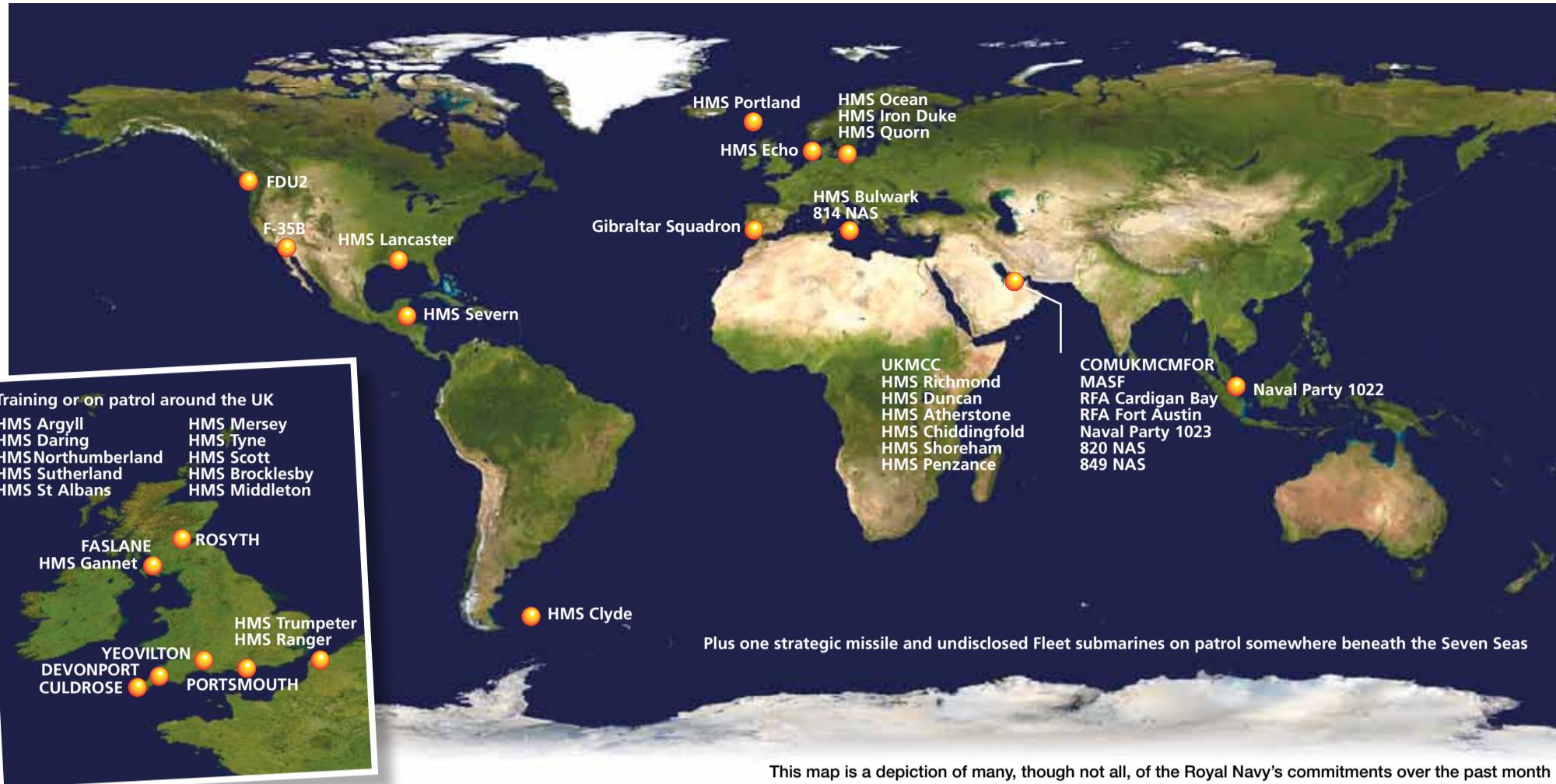
Families miss squash drinks, 'proper' bacon and English tea and get very excited when a food parcel arrives from their loved ones in the UK.

The Families Committee – which has support from Civ Mil on Edwards as well as from Reading Force, the British Legion, HMS Heroes and the NFF – organises a wide range of events, from a children's disco to a vineyard tour.

Families make the most of their weekends and holidays, with the Californian beaches, Yosemite and Las Vegas all within a few hours.

Amy Beck added: "We don't really have a choice over coming here but we are making the most of it."





This map is a depiction of many, though not all, of the Royal Navy's commitments over the past month



FLEET FOCUS

Protecting our nation's interests

AIRCRAFT from the past, the present and the future dominate this aviation-themed edition of *Navy News*.

We kick-off with a visit to the future and the **F-35B** Lightning II (see pages 3, 4, 5 and 6). Royal Navy personnel are currently at Edwards Air Force Base in California about to start operational testing on the joint strike fighter which will fly from the Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers.

Keeping with the 'something new' theme and the maritime **Wildcat**, which is three months into its maiden deployment (see page 15). The crew from **201 Flight** are aboard **HMS Lancaster** putting their helicopter, nicknamed Voodoo, through its paces.

While one part of the Fleet Air Arm is embracing its new aircraft, the people of Cornwall came out in their thousands to witness a flypast of Sea Kings from **771 Search and Rescue**, which bows out of service at the end of the March next year (see page 22).

And it is the Sea King which takes centre stage as we look at **Commando Helicopter Force**'s 22 years of virtually unbroken deployments (see pages 24-25). From Bosnia to Sierra Leone, CHF personnel recall some of their highlights. The Junglies are converting to their new Merlins and we take a look at their new futuristic-looking simulators which will be installed at RNAS Yeovilton (see page 26).

Also at Yeovilton, the **Royal Navy Historic Flight** are well into their summer display season (see page 27), which this year has been hailed as the year of the **Swordfish**.

At sea and the Royal Navy's flagship **HMS Ocean** has been taking part in the huge NATO exercise Baltops in the Baltic Sea (see centre pages). Ocean took over as flagship from **HMS Bulwark**, which is continuing to rescue migrants making the dangerous Mediterranean crossing in overcrowded and flimsy vessels (see right).

Eleven sailors from **Fleet Diving Unit 2** enjoyed a busman's holiday on the west coast of Canada (see page 17) where they spent a few days blowing up stuff during an international exercise.

Portsmouth-based frigate **HMS Lancaster** took part in New Orleans Navy Week as her nine-month Atlantic-Pacific-Atlantic deployment got under way (see page 23).

Staying in the Americas, patrol ship **HMS Severn** joined more than a dozen navies for Tradewinds 2015, an exercise which ranged from St Kitts in the east to Belize in the west (see page 11).

HMS Penzance found – and destroyed – historic ordnance in a sweep of the northern Gulf (see page 9)... as did **HMS Quorn** in the Baltic before she joined Baltops (see page 8).

In chillier climes was **HMS Portland** as her crew enjoyed 48 hours in the remote Faroe Islands (see page 8) – the first visit by a Royal Navy ship in 15 years.

In Portsmouth, a remote-controlled aircraft has been surveying destroyer **HMS Diamond** (see page 16) to see if the small drone can produce a high-quality survey of ships.

Royal Navy personnel were also involved in commemorative ceremonies with P2000s **HMS Trumpeter** and **Ranger**, with trainees from **HMS Collingwood**, travelling to France for commemorations to mark the 75th anniversary of Dunkirk (see page 19).

Prince Harry joined families of the fallen and military personnel for the rededication ceremony of the **Bastion Wall Memorial** at the National Memorial Arboretum (see page 18). One of the names on the wall – Mne Sam Alexander – was also remembered in an unusual ceremony at the Royal Southern Yacht Club at Hamble (see page 18). Comrades from **42 Commando** 'captured' a new landing ramp at the club, where Mne Alexander sailed as a boy. He earned the Military Cross in Afghanistan in 2009.

Finally, the Royal Navy has for the first time surveyed the remains of the ships it lost at the **Battle of Jutland** in 1916 with today's technology ahead of next year's centenary commemorations. **HMS Echo** performed the honours (see page 16).

Bulwark of life

MORE than 3,800 desperate people now owe their lives to the sailors and Royal Marines of **HMS Bulwark**.

In a succession of rescues from late May to late June – both by the assault ship and international warships – men and women, young and old, even a few unborn were saved from unsafe vessels off the Libyan coast.

They tried to escape poverty, conflict and unrest across Africa in wooden boats and glorified dinghies, but invariably got no closer to Europe than 40 miles from their native continent, where they were saved by an international naval force.

For Bulwark, the climactic day was Sunday June 7 when migrants came aboard from dawn till dusk.

Twice Bulwark's eyes in the sky – her Merlin helicopters of 814 Naval Air Squadron – sighted clusters of small vessels in distress off the Libyan coast, prompting a full-scale rescue involving small and large landing craft.

By the day's end – and with an additional 100 migrants transferred from the Italian frigate Fasan – there were more than 1,200 'passengers' aboard the Devonport assault ship.

So large was the influx that Bulwark opened her forecastle and flight deck to accommodate all the migrants while the ship made for Catania in Sicily to hand them over to the Italian authorities.

Not among them, however, was Favor from Nigeria, flown off to Malta as Bulwark

made for Sicily as her waters broke while she was being rescued.

"When I was told that a woman's waters had broken my heart missed a beat as I was the only trained medical assistant on the landing craft," said 29-year-old MA Sam Berry.

"But then my training kicked in. I made the patient comfortable, and provided all the medical care that I could."

Having been assessed by the sickbay team, the decision was taken to transfer Favor, accompanied by her husband, to hospital immediately; 814 provided the 'flying ambulance'.

As *Navy News* went to press, the total number of souls saved on Operation Weald had climbed to 3,823.

Some 737 of those – including at least 50 children – were picked up on an equally-busy day of lifesaving on the ship's previous patrol at the end of May.

In a day of five rescues involving the Royal, Italian, Irish and German Navies, Bulwark herself saved 369 people, before taking on board another 368 migrants saved by the other countries' vessels.

"Just seeing the young children being rescued from such a dangerously-overcrowded boat is quite shocking," said Cdr Martin Connell, Commander of the UK Amphibious Task Group, whose staff are directing Operation Weald.

"Their wooden boat was sitting so low in the water as to be almost invisible to passing ships – they are lucky we found them."

Completing the rescues for this past month were one rubber and two wooden boats located by a Merlin on June 20.

Bulwark made for one of the wooden craft, leaving FGS Schleswig-Holstein and the civilian rescue vessel Dignity 1 to pick up those aboard the others.

All 914 migrants saved – including 133 women and 39 children – were transferred to Bulwark for her to deliver to Taranto.

Defence Secretary Michael Fallon, who visited Bulwark on June 6 to witness the ship's efforts first-hand, thanked all on board for their "unwavering efforts" in their "vital role saving lives at sea".

He continued: "However, we cannot simply deal with the symptoms of this problem; we must go after the root cause and the trafficking gangs behind it who are making money out of human misery."

"A wider political solution is required to this crisis, but that does not detract from the rescue at sea."

Bulwark's 60-day mission is due to end early this month when she hands over to survey ship **HMS Enterprise**.

When Bulwark's sailors do turn for home, they can do so with their heads held high.

"Despite the large numbers involved, my sailors and Royal Marines have shown once again their professionalism, skills and resilience in the face of some pretty arduous circumstances and I am hugely proud of them all," said her Commanding Officer Capt Nick Cooke-Priest.

Picture: ET(WE/CIS) Louise George





Visit to the (Port)land of the Faroes

A SWEEPING panoramic vista captured on the flight deck of HMS Portland.

You're probably thinking 'north-west Scotland'. *Close.*

If you'd said 'Kollafjörður' (pronounced *kot-la-fier-er*) we'd be very impressed indeed (not least by your linguistic ability).

These are the Faroe Islands – and not since HMS Brilliant in 1990 has the White Ensign fluttered in this part of the world.

The Devonport-based frigate

took a brief break from Shark Hunt, the latest in a series of anti-submarine exercises she's joined in so far this year, with 48 hours in the remote islands, located roughly half-way between Norway and Iceland.

Portland dropped anchor in the fjord named after this village of 793 souls, which lies about nine miles from the capital Torshavn.

The short break afforded some of the 200-strong ship's company

the chance to explore.

"Nowhere in England looks quite like the Faroes," said deputy weapon engineer officer Lt Matt Freeman, who went for a stroll. "The rock formations, streams, and wildlife were very impressive and the view from the top of the mountain over the surrounding islands and fjords was definitely worth it."

AB Bill Sayer added: "It was an excellent visit – the islands were very dramatic and we were

welcomed everywhere that we went."

The short visit provided the ship's company with a break from the six-hours-on, six-hours-off routine they had been running during Shark Hunt... which itself came on the back of another anti-submarine exercise, Dynamic Mongoose (there were no mongooses or sharks in either...).

Played out in the Norwegian Sea (between the North and

Barents Seas) it featured ships, submarines, and maritime patrol aircraft from seven nations.

Alongside Portland were units from the USA, Canada, France, Germany, Norway and Italy all taking part in the hunt, directed by the US 6th Fleet.

Portland is the RN's leading submarine hunter – 2087 towed array sonar, Merlin Mk2 helicopter, the Navy's most senior seagoing anti-submarine officer, CO Capt Simon Asquith

(a former deep – poacher turned gamekeeper).

"Shark Hunt provided a great opportunity for me and my team to practise, improve and develop our anti-submarine warfare skills to find and track the enemy below," said ops room supervisor CPO(UW) Ted 'Darby' Allan.

Her hunts for sharks and mongooses done, Portland is due to return to base in Devonport for a period of leave and maintenance over the summer.

Headway on the Medway

DEFENCE Secretary Michael Fallon unleashed the white heat of technology as the first steel was cut on the Navy's second new patrol ship.

He set the cutters going on HMS Medway, the 'middle child' of three offshore patrol vessels which will begin to join the Fleet from 2017.

While the hi-tech laser was at work, he chatted with workers at BAE's Govan yard on the Clyde and saw progress on HMS Forth, the first of the trio which has been under construction since last autumn.

In time they'll be joined by HMS Trent, the final of this third generation of River-class patrol ships as part of a £348m deal with BAE which will keep 800 shipwrights and engineers busy for several years.

The 2,000-tonne patrol ships will be crewed by 34 sailors, plus up to two dozen more personnel (such as a boarding team), and a Wildcat or Merlin helicopter depending on the mission.

As well as providing the RN with new ships, the building programme for the third generation of River-class vessels will act as a stepping stone to work on the next-generation Type 26 frigates.

Richmond's heroin haul

NEARLY one tonne of heroin worth £400m will never fund terrorists – or reach the streets of the UK – thanks to a series of busts in the Indian Ocean involving the Royal Navy.

Six boats carrying narcotics have been boarded off the east coast of Africa and their cargoes seized by an international task force, including British frigate HMS Richmond.

The Portsmouth-based warship and her counterparts in Combined Task Force 150, the international force committed to carrying out counter-terrorism and drug-smuggling patrols, pounced as the vessels headed for Tanzania.

It's estimated that, if distributed, the 981kg of heroin seized would make three million individual doses – while the money generated by the sale of the drugs on the streets would be around \$625m (£400m).

That money would have ended up in the pockets of terrorist organisations.

Richmond, which arrived in the region in April to take over from her sister HMS Kent, used her suite of sensors to identify potential drug smugglers for the group.

She also sent up her ScanEagle 'eyes in the sky' – the small unmanned aircraft which loitered undetected above potential smugglers by day and night, monitoring goings on and reporting back to the ship.

The information the British ship provided the task group's commanders aboard the French supply ship FS Var allowed Australian and New Zealand boarding teams from Australia's HMAS



Newcastle and New Zealand's HMNZS Te Kaha to close in for the busts.

Despite not physically taking part in the seizures, Richmond's CO Cdr Mark Anderson says his ship and its 200 sailors and Royal Marines still had a vital role in the half-dozen busts.

"Richmond has played her part in disrupting the narcotics supply routes via Africa into Europe and the UK, working with France, Australia, New Zealand and Tanzanian authorities," he said.

"It's a unique thing the Royal Navy can do, deploying thousands of miles from home, working side by side with regional allies and having a direct impact on the supply of narcotics into the UK."

French Captain René-Jean Crignola, Task Force 150's commander, said the group had made "a new contribution to counter-narcotics efforts."

He added: "We can be proud of what we have done and will continue operations in the coming months."

His is one of three peacekeeping naval groups east of Suez whose actions are directed by the Combined Maritime Forces in Bahrain.

Its deputy commander, the Royal Navy's Commodore Will Warrender, said the series of busts were rich reward at the end of painstaking operations "to identify, track and board trafficking ships and dhows across thousands of miles of open seas."

He continued: "This is a great result. To bring together a coalition of ships and disrupt the trafficking of heroin in such an effective way shows just how well the Combined Maritime Forces works together."



Quorn excel at Tallinn spotting

A THUMBS-up from AB(D) Adam 'Whitts' Whittingham as he returns to the surface of the Baltic having identified a German WW2 mine on the seabed.

It was one of nearly 200 pieces of historic ordnance located by HMS Quorn and fellow minehunters during a two-week sweep along the Estonian and Latvian coasts by NATO forces.

An estimated 85,000 mines were sown from the Gulf of Finland to the Kattegat during the two world wars, not to mention bombers dropping their payloads, depth charges and shells.

Seven decades after the conflict's end and a substantial quantity of that ordnance remains in the Baltic – prompting regular co-ordinated HOD (Historic Ordnance Disposal) hunts by divers and mine-warfare vessels.

The latest, Open Spirit, concentrated on the coastal waters of Estonia – the three Baltic states take it in turns to host the exercise – which were heavily mined by the Germans and the Soviets in WW2.

This year, in addition to Quorn and other members of NATO's Mine Counter-Measures Group 1 from Germany, Belgium, Poland, Netherlands, Norway, France and Lithuania, another half dozen nations accepted the invitation to participate: 700 sailors, 19 ships and seven dive teams in all.

They focused on the Bay of Tallinn (scene of particularly vicious fighting in August 1941), the Irbe Strait leading to the Gulf of Riga and the islands of Muhu and Saaremaa (again the site of fierce combat, this time late in the war).

Of the 200 or so old bombs and the like located by the international force, 38 were blown up in controlled explosions – three of them by Quorn.

In this instance, Whitts and his shipmates 'counter-mined' the historic ordnance, using a small charge remotely detonated to safely send the mine to kingdom come.

"The ship had picked up a strong contact on sonar, so I was sent down to investigate," he said.

"When I reached the bottom it was pretty dark, however as soon as I saw it I knew it was a mine. That's when the training kicked in; I took all the measurements so we could identify it later and then came back to the surface."

Fresh from blowing up the detritus of wars past, Quorn and the rest of the NATO group shifted focus to the present-day mine threat during the Baltops war games (see centre pages).



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Frigate delivers dispatch

HMS NORTHERNLAND played a leading role in events marking the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo.

The Plymouth-based frigate sailed from Ostend in Belgium to Broadstairs in Kent, re-enacting part of the journey of the original Waterloo Dispatch between the battlefield and London, bringing news of Wellington's victory over Napoleon.

The New Waterloo Dispatch retraced the route of brig-sloop HMS Peruvian in 1815; the message went on from the coast to London by post-chaise carriage in both 1815 and 2015.

The anniversary celebrations in London included a parade on The Mall, led by the Band of the Royal Marines Portsmouth.

Ten schoolchildren were taken by pilot boat to spend two hours sampling life on board the Type 23 frigate off the coast of Kent, having won a history competition.

A predecessor of HMS Northumberland also played her part in the aftermath of the battle, transporting Napoleon to exile in St Helena.

Show time

LAST year saw a strong Royal Navy presence at the Bournemouth Air Festival – and a similar showing is planned for this year's event.

As well as ships off the beach during the festival – which runs from August 20-23 – the Senior Service is expected to be represented by aircraft, including the Black Cats display team.

■ <http://bournemouthair.co.uk>

No blanks for Penzance

THIS is the unmistakable shape of a bomb – a thousand pounder to be precise – located, identified and destroyed by HMS Penzance in the Gulf.

The British minehunter joined the French for a concerted effort to find and blow up four pieces of historic ordnance scattered on the seabed.

After a week spent scanning the search area in the northern Gulf in company with FS Andromede, Penzance – based in Bahrain as one of the UK's four minehunters deployed permanently to the region – found this bomb.

Despite lying 60 metres down, when detonated by a controlled explosion it created a substantial shockwave on the surface.

"The size of this explosion really highlighted what a potential danger this ordnance posed," said Penzance's operations officer Lt Matt Bryers.

"It is clear today that our presence in the Gulf is vital, and it makes my job worthwhile to have ensured the safety of shipping in the area."

Having dealt with real dangers, Penzance shifted focus to drill mines and training with the Americans and Bahrainis in the shallow waters off the coast of the latter's kingdom.

The week's efforts were concentrated on Penzance's team of specialist divers working side-by-side with the US Navy's Underwater Unmanned Vehicles.

"This was a really great experience for me as a diver," said AB(Diver) Jake Connell.

"We showed the US Navy our capabilities and worked really well together.



"It was interesting to see how they use their equipment and it made our searches a lot quicker operating together."

The Sandown-class ship – which shares her base in Bahrain with sister HMS Shoreham plus Hunt-class minehunters Atherstone and Chiddingfold – then moved further out to sea with the Americans' USS Gladiator to find and recover three large orange conical drill mines.

"The last few weeks have really shown what the 21st-Century Royal Navy does – working with coalition partners and key alliances in the Gulf, we are committed to a permanent presence in the region, developing the capacity of local navies and supporting peace and freedom of the sea for all," said Penzance's Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Jim Blythe.

His ship is now undergoing a spot of maintenance in Bahrain to

allow her to continue operations through the punishing heat of the Gulf summer.

■ The new £6m headquarters to direct the RN's operations east of Suez has been formally opened in Bahrain.

The complex – a mixture of nerve centre for the Navy's staff directing operations in the region and waterfront support for British vessels deployed in the Gulf – replaces facilities split between the port at Mina Salman and the US Navy's headquarters nearby.

The Royal Navy has ties with Bahrain going back two centuries and has maintained a permanent presence in the Gulf for more than 30 years.

But the Senior Service's role in the region has mushroomed since 2001, when it established its first headquarters in Bahrain

when a staff of eight was choreographing operations.

Today the UK Maritime Component Command, led by Cdr Will Warrender, numbers more than 80 men and women.

Armed Forces Minister Penny Mordaunt cut the ceremonial ribbon to the new facility in the presence of British and international dignitaries, including First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas and Vice Admiral John Miller, who commands the US Navy's 5th Fleet from Bahrain.

As well as attending the opening ceremony, guests were treated to a tour of Type 45 destroyer HMS Duncan, which was in port taking a break from working in the USS Theodore Roosevelt's carrier battle group on operations against the forces of ISIL in the Middle East.



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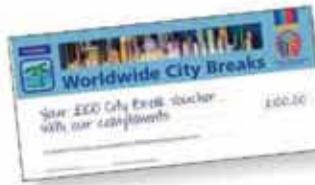
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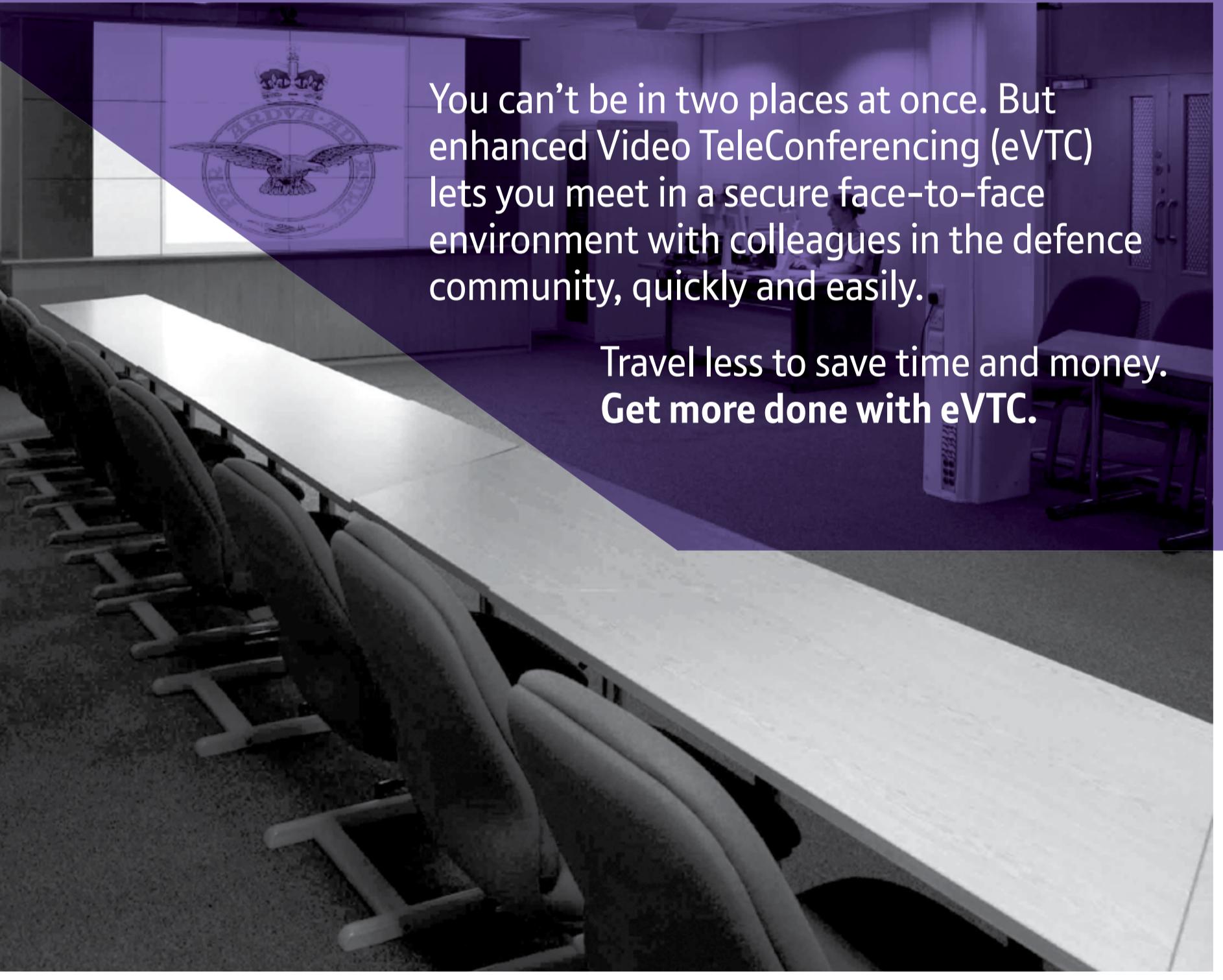


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A black and white photograph of a conference room. In the foreground, a long white conference table is visible, with several dark office chairs arranged around it. In the background, a large projection screen displays the Royal Air Force crest, which features a heraldic eagle with wings spread, perched on a shield, with the motto 'PER ARDVA AVIA' above it. The room appears to be a formal meeting space within a military or defense facility.

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● A new White Ensign is attached to the main gun on the wreck of HMS Antelope in San Carlos Sound

Ensign replaced on wrecked frigate

MEMBERS of the Falkland Islands Sub Aqua Club have replaced the White Ensign which still 'flies' on the wreck of HMS Antelope.

Six divers, four military and two civilian, from the club, located at Mount Pleasant, conducted a number of dives on the Type 21 frigate, which lies in San Carlos Water.

The aim of the dive was to survey the condition of the ship but also, more importantly, to replace the ensign which has been located on the main gun for a number of years.

Antelope sank on May 24 1982 and two men died as a result of

the attack – a member of the ship's crew and a bomb disposal expert who tried to defuse an unexploded bomb.

The devastating explosion which shattered her left history with one of the iconic images of the conflict in the South Atlantic.

As a mark of respect for the two individuals an ensign was hung from the main gun.

The team, led by Army Capt Stu Bailes, conducted 17 dives over a weekend to firstly survey the ship and secondly to change the ensign, which had been in place since 2013.



As the wreck is a designated war grave it was necessary for the club to get clearance from the Receiver of Wreck prior to conducting any diving activity.

Mandy Dawson and Maj Martin Hales RE, both of whom were present during previous ensign changes, assisted in locating the 4.5in gun – easily distinguishable with its rounded turret and barrel facing forward.

Once located they removed the old Ensign, which was covered with marine life and totally unrecognisable as a flag.

Instead of recovering it, as was

previously planned, the ensign was gently laid on the wreck to preserve the sea life.

Once completed the new ensign was attached and now flutters proudly in the ocean currents.

Antelope rests on her port side with the main damage on her starboard side; the bow has collapsed onto the sea bed.

Visibility was only about three metres and the water was vivid green – full of algae – so it was difficult to pick out some aspects of the ship, but as the divers swam along her length they could see railings, scuttles and superstructure, even though it is now encrusted with marine life.



'bean busy

SUB Lt Matt Smith scans the shores of Belize as HMS Severn prepares to let rip (technical term) with her 20mm main gun as a naval exercise involving 14 nations reaches its fiery climax.

For large-scale international naval exercises (see the centre pages) are not purely the domain of NATO; no, the US military's Southern Command is perfectly capable of doing likewise.

And did.

Accepting the invitation to participate in the three-week-long Tradewinds 2015 were (deep breath) forces from Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Mexico, Canada, the host nation and, not least, Severn flying the flag for Blighty.

Organisers set their goals as improving the ability of the many nations to carry out a combined operation, responding to natural disasters and dealing with organised crime – the latter two points are the reasons Britain deploys a ship to the region.

They split this year's exercises between the waters around the tiny nation of St Kitts and Nevis (population about one third the size of Severn's native Portsmouth), then shifted 1,700 miles to the west to the base of the Yucatán peninsula.

Throughout her part in the exercise, Severn had six Belizean Coast Guard officers embarked to develop relationships between the two countries.

And at times, the patrol ship also found herself hosting personnel from the other nations taking part in the exercise.

"This is the great thing about Tradewinds – we're learning to work together and we're building lasting relationships," said PO(ETME) Derek Wilkinson.

"Here we have Europeans, North Americans and Central Americans working and living together and we're doing a bit of everything.

"From painting schools to classroom instruction to actual hands-on training and at-sea scenarios."

Lt Cdr Aceion Prescott of the Jamaican Defence Force-Coast Guard said the experience of exercising alongside more than a dozen other nations was invaluable.

"I know I can work with all the people I've worked with here again," he added.

"Tradewinds has given all of us the opportunity to learn that valuable lesson and, as professional and necessary as all the training has been, I think this is by far the most important lesson learned."

For Severn, Tradewinds came on the back of a four-day visit to Ocho Rios on the north coast of Jamaica (Bond buffs might remember it as the setting for much of *Dr No* half a century ago).

Members of the Jamaica Defence Force Regiment came aboard for a tour and briefing on Severn's recent operations.

The visit coincided with the Queen's Official Birthday and sailors travelled the 30 miles across the island to the capital Kingston, where the British High Commission was hosting celebrations; the ship provided a ceremonial guard as well as catering and stewarding services for proceedings.

The remainder of the visit allowed for routine supplies and fuel to be embarked, a crew change – one third of the ship's company is rotated every few weeks to help sustain continuous operations – and some rest and relaxation.

With the end of Tradewinds, Severn's inaugural Caribbean deployment – like the rest of the first batch of the River class she spent the first decade of her RN career in European waters helping to maintain fishing stocks – is drawing to a close.

She's due back in Portsmouth in the middle of this month having visited more than 20 countries since arriving in the Caribbean in late 2014.

● In choppy waters, HMS Severn's sea boat pulls alongside the US Coast Guard cutter Paul Clark to take on board three Royal Canadian Navy sailors during Tradewinds

Pictures: MCS1 Dan Meaney, US Navy



● Bernard Madden lays a wreath at the grave of his uncle Edward at the Estonian Defence Forces Cemetery, watched by members of 121 Expeditionary Air Wing

Picture: Ft Lt Cameron Rennie RAF

Madden family ceremony.

Wreaths were laid by the British Defence Attaché Lt Col Sawyer, Deputy Head of Mission Kathryn Lindsay and Lt Col Koemets of the Estonian Defence Forces, while personnel of the Royal Air Force attended the ceremony to honour Edward Madden.

The RAF is deployed to support policing of the airspace around Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania which NATO has done since 2004. The last time the RAF provided Baltic Air Policing was in the summer of 2014, based out of Lithuania where Norwegian F-16s and Italian Typhoons are now stationed.



Merlin spells new era

A SQUADRON rich in history has been leading the way for the Commando Helicopter Force as it bids farewell to the Sea King and embraces the Merlin.

846 NAS returned to its spiritual home of RNAS Yeovilton in May this year – arriving in their new Merlin Mk3 helicopters from RAF Benson where, over the last five years, personnel have undergone the transition to the new aircraft.

Lt Col Derek Stafford, Commanding Officer of 846, said: “The challenge of transition has been immense and it is testament to the Herculean efforts of both the CHF and RAF that 846 NAS has retaken its place within the Commando Helicopter Force, fit for operations with its new airframe.

“I am extremely honoured to be not only the first Commanding Officer of the squadron in the Merlin era, but also the Commanding Officer with the privilege of returning the squadron to its spiritual home at RNAS Yeovilton.”

Just over two years ago 846 NAS were operating the Sea King Mk4 helicopter in Afghanistan, moving to RAF Benson to begin the transition in March 2013 followed by the squadron standing up as the first Commando Helicopter Force Squadron to be equipped with the Merlin in October 2014.

When the Merlins are marinised – folding rotors and the tail – and become Mk4s, CHF will use grey helicopters rather than their jungle green.

The squadron first officially formed up on April 1 1943 at Quonset Point, Rhode Island, in the United States, flying carrier-based Avengers in a torpedo bomber and reconnaissance role.

A fighter flight of Wildcats was added at the end of the same year.

At the end of the war 846 became a trials unit, being renumbered 751, and the original designation did not reappear until May 1962, when the outfit, equipped with six Whirlwind helicopters, first took on its guise as a commando squadron.

846 embarked in HMS Albion later that same year,

and was swiftly called into action, taking part in operations against terrorists in Brunei – a role that lasted until October 1964.

With the exception of a handful of brief periods when the squadron was disbanded – including a spell as a deep maintenance unit in the late 1970s – 846 has maintained its presence in the CHF world ever since.

Capt Niall Griffin, Commanding Officer of CHF said: “The central

purpose of the CHF has always been, and will continue to be, the safe and effective support of Royal Marines Commandos from the sea to the battlefield, across all environments.

“With the Merlin I foresee a very busy and successful future in doing just that.”



Atlantic..... 1944
Arctic..... 1944-45
Norway..... 1944-45
Normandy..... 1944-45
Falklands..... 1982

Honours



● Brig Richard Spencer

New home for 846

846 NAS has a new home at RNAS Yeovilton.

The building, on the edge of the flightline, was officially opened by Brig Richard Spencer, pictured left.

The squadron has operated many different aircraft during its 70-year history – from Avengers during WW2 to Sea Kings in Afghanistan.

Already a proven aircraft, the marinisation programme will see the Merlin Mk3 equipped with a folding main rotor head and a modified undercarriage for deck landings.

The Merlin will ensure the Commando Helicopter Force continue to successfully support the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and the Joint Helicopter Command.

Motto: *Semper Instans (Always Threatening)*
Aircraft: Merlin Mk3
Manufacturer: AgustaWestland
Engines: Three Rolls-Royce Turbomeca RTM 322 turbines
Thrust: 2,263shp each
Span: 18.6m
Length: 22.8m.
Armament: Two machine guns
Max altitude: 15,000ft
Max speed: 167kts
Aircrew: four

Facts



PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES

One of the pioneers of Naval aviation – indeed one of the pioneers of aviation, period – stands in front of his Henri Farman biplane on Tenedos in the summer of 1915.

From this basic 2,000ft landing strip, Flight Commander Reginald Marix and his comrades in No.3 Squadron Naval Air Squadron truly proved the value of air power in support not just of the Fleet, but also to troops on the ground in Gallipoli – despite woefully inadequate aircraft like the Farman.

The two-seater ‘pusher’ (so called due to the location of the engine and propeller) lumbered through the skies at no more than 70mph and could reach no higher than 1,000ft.

By July 1915, a new, improved Farman was arriving at Tenedos. It still took 15 minutes to reach the battlefields of the Dardanelles (and another three minutes to reach its ceiling of 3,000ft) but it could deliver up to 500lb of bombs (instead of the 20-pounders the naval fliers had begun the campaign with).

To use a Naval expression, No.3 Squadron (later renamed No.3 Wing) was very much a mixieblob: besides the Farmans, there were also Bregeut and Nieuport biplanes.

The squadron’s commander, the wonderfully-eccentric Charles Samson (he brought a charger he’d captured from a German cavalryman on the Western front to Tenedos) favoured the new Nieuport which arrived in the Aegean in the summer of 1915 – “it climbed like a witch”. It could also reach 17,000ft.

Squadron life was perilous. Engines had a nasty habit of cutting out (often with fatal consequences) and if the fliers brought their machines down on a tiny strip at Cape Helles, they did so in full view of the Turks... and Turkish artillery. If they managed to land safely, the aircraft had to taxi furiously to reach the relative safety offered by a small hill.

In spite of such dangers, almost every day men like Marix and Samson wrote a new chapter in the annals

of flight: spotting for the guns of the Fleet, aerial reconnaissance, strafing and bombing enemy troops, torpedoing enemy shipping, striking at lines of communication. They made nearly three dozen attacks on the sole road down which supplies came from mainland Turkey – although they never managed to close it.

But on occasions, the naval aviators – the principal providers of British air power throughout the ill-starred Gallipoli campaign – did intervene decisively in the battle.

On the morning of May 17 1915, Marix had sighted heavy activity off the small port of Ak Bashi Liman, just north of the present-day town of Eceabat.

Intrigued, he returned that afternoon with Samson for a closer inspection – a round trip of well over an hour; it was a chance to try out the first Breguet which had been delivered.

The new arrival was expected to bomb Constantinople – more than 170 miles away – so the two officers

decided to test its credentials; Marix had some experience of ‘strategic bombing’ (as we call it today) – he’d destroyed a zeppelin in its shed in Düsseldorf in the opening weeks of the war.

Armed with one 100lb bomb, 14 20-pounders, and a Lewis machine-gun – “a pretty formidable account for those days,” Samson recalled 15 years later – the duo set off to give Ak Bashi Liman “a look-over”. By that, he meant plastering the port and a nearby camp.

The bombs caused not just death and devastation (13 dead, 44 wounded) but Turkish labourers panicked and fled for the hills. They didn’t come back for two days.

That alone would have been sufficient to disrupt the enemy, but it was the intelligence Marix and Samson brought back of the Turks massing for an assault – an entire new division – which was decisive.

When the Ottoman troops attacked on May 19,

the Anzacs were waiting for them. When they tried to swarm across around 300 yards of no man’s land, the Turks were mown down.

When the attacks finally petered out eight hours later, an estimated 10,000 Turks had been killed or wounded. No man’s land was strewn with the dead and dying. It was as stark a lesson in the power of aerial reconnaissance as ever delivered in the Dardanelles.

■ This photograph (Q 44363) is one of more than ten million held by the Imperial War Museum. They can be viewed or purchased at www.iwmcollections.org.uk, by emailing photos@iwm.org.uk, or by phoning 0207 416 5333.



Black Duke returns to sea after 18-month refit



● HMS Monmouth leaves Devonport

Picture: L(Phot) Caroline Davies

YES, this is summer on the south coast...

And more importantly, yes, that is the Black Duke. At sea. For the first time in 18 months.

HMS Monmouth sailed to begin trials after being out of action since the end of 2013 undergoing a refit.

In the intervening period she's received the new Artisan 3D radar which is becoming standard fit across the frigate flotilla, upgrades to her Seawolf air defence missile system and 4.5in main gun.

For a ship that's nearly 25 years old, there was a significant amount of work on her superstructure needed – not least adding 17

tonnes of new steel covering an area of 220 square metres (slightly larger than a tennis court).

Since last prowling the Seven Seas, nine in every ten of the ship's company has changed – and one third of those who've joined have embarked on their first ship.

Among the few who have been with the Black Duke throughout the revamp is her weapon engineer officer Lt Cdr James Holgate.

"Having brought Monmouth into refit over 18 months ago it is a real honour to finally get the chance to reap the benefits of the hard work put in by all," he said.

Eighteen months ago the frigate's youngest sailor – 18-year-old ET(WE) Harry Thomas from Anglesey – was walking through the gates at HMS Raleigh.

"I've been looking forward to going to sea for the first time since I joined the Royal Navy – it's what I joined to do and I cannot wait to put all my training into practice for the first time."

After initial engine and manoeuvring trials, the Type 23 will shift to testing her weapons and sensors as well as training her crew for the rigours of her first post-refit deployment.

HMS Monmouth will spend the next few months conducting her sea trials.

Free range for commandos at police centre Juliet Bravo



● Marines from Juliet Company, 42 Commando at the shooting range in Gateshead

ROYAL Marines stride away from targets they've just peppered with small arms in a state-of-the-art cathedral of marksmanship.

These are the men of Juliet Company, 42 Commando. And this is probably Britain's most advanced shooting range... making it the perfect place for Exercise Urban Strike.

The Bickleigh-based green berets made the 400-mile journey from Devon to Tyneside as they honed their urban warrior skills... in a business park... in Gateshead.

For as well as the obligatory cash and carry and Mister Twisters children's indoor playground, the sprawling industrial site is also home to Northumbria Police Operational and Tactical Training Centre.

Just two years old, indoors it features two 60-metre firing ranges (plenty big enough to drive vehicles around in if you so wish), a 'judgmental suite' – a CGI simulator at which the shooter and the target can react to each other's movements.

And outdoors, there's a 'tactical training area' – a mock-up of a street with blocks of flats and terraced houses which you can smash your way into, fight your way around and the like.

All of which should be bread and butter to the Julies. The company is 42's specialist unit when it comes to urban combat (aka FISHing – Fighting In Someone's House).

Over half the world's population live in towns and cities – and that's expected to rise – so being prepared to react to a developing crisis in such an environment is a vital for the green berets.

The Bickleigh boys will truly get the chance to fight their way through a town this autumn when they head to the Mojave Desert and the US Marine Corps' sprawling ranges at Twentynine Palms for Exercise Black Alligator.

Before you can wrestle with alligators, however, you have to start with tiddlers. Hence a few days at the police complex with simulated and live firing of a variety of

weapons – chiefly Glock 17 pistols and SA80 rifles.

"Northumbria Police and Royal Marines have established some excellent links in recent years," explained Capt Chris Huggett, Second-in-Command of Juliet Company.

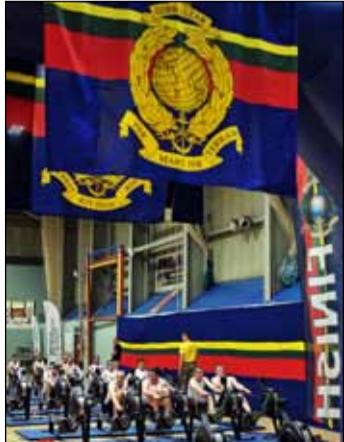
"The police have state-of-the-art facilities which allow us to really think about our actions and hone our skills on the range.

"These are all essential skills for Royal Marines. As you move into a cluttered urban environment, you need to have the confidence to handle any scenario.

"This facility gives us maximum training value – and a safe environment to practise the skills necessary to fight effectively in built-up areas."

Both Urban Strike and Black Alligator are all elements of the comprehensive training package 42 require to take over as the UK's Lead Commando Group – the amphibious unit the government can call on in the event of an international crisis – from May 2016.

Up for toughest of tests



● Competitors take part in the final discipline, the rowing

Picture: (LA)Phot Dean Nixon

INJURED personnel pushed themselves to the limit at the Royal Marines Rehabilitation Triathlon at Commando Training Centre.

Swimming, adaptive cycling and rowing were par for the course for the 150 competitors, including personnel from the Army, RAF, Dutch Marines and United States Marine Corps.

"It's a passion of mine to help guys push their boundaries," says Sgt Mo Morris, the event organiser, who works at Haslar Company, which is a complex trauma rehabilitation centre based at HMS Drake.

"This competition provides a platform where they can compete not just against each other but against themselves to see what they can do and how far they can push their limits."

Richard Kenworthy, Head of Fundraising for the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund (RMCTF), said: "It's a hoofing event because what we're doing for the guys, whether they are wounded, sick or injured, is giving them the ability to take part in competitive sport."

The RMCTF and Help for Heroes jointly funded the Rehab Triathlon.

Competitors included Cpl Paul Vice, who was blown up in Afghanistan in 2011.

"It's about pushing yourself to the limit," said Paul. "It's a challenge because with only one leg and one arm I wanted to test the boundaries. I crossed those boundaries today. It took an hour-and-a-half but it was nice crossing the finishing line."

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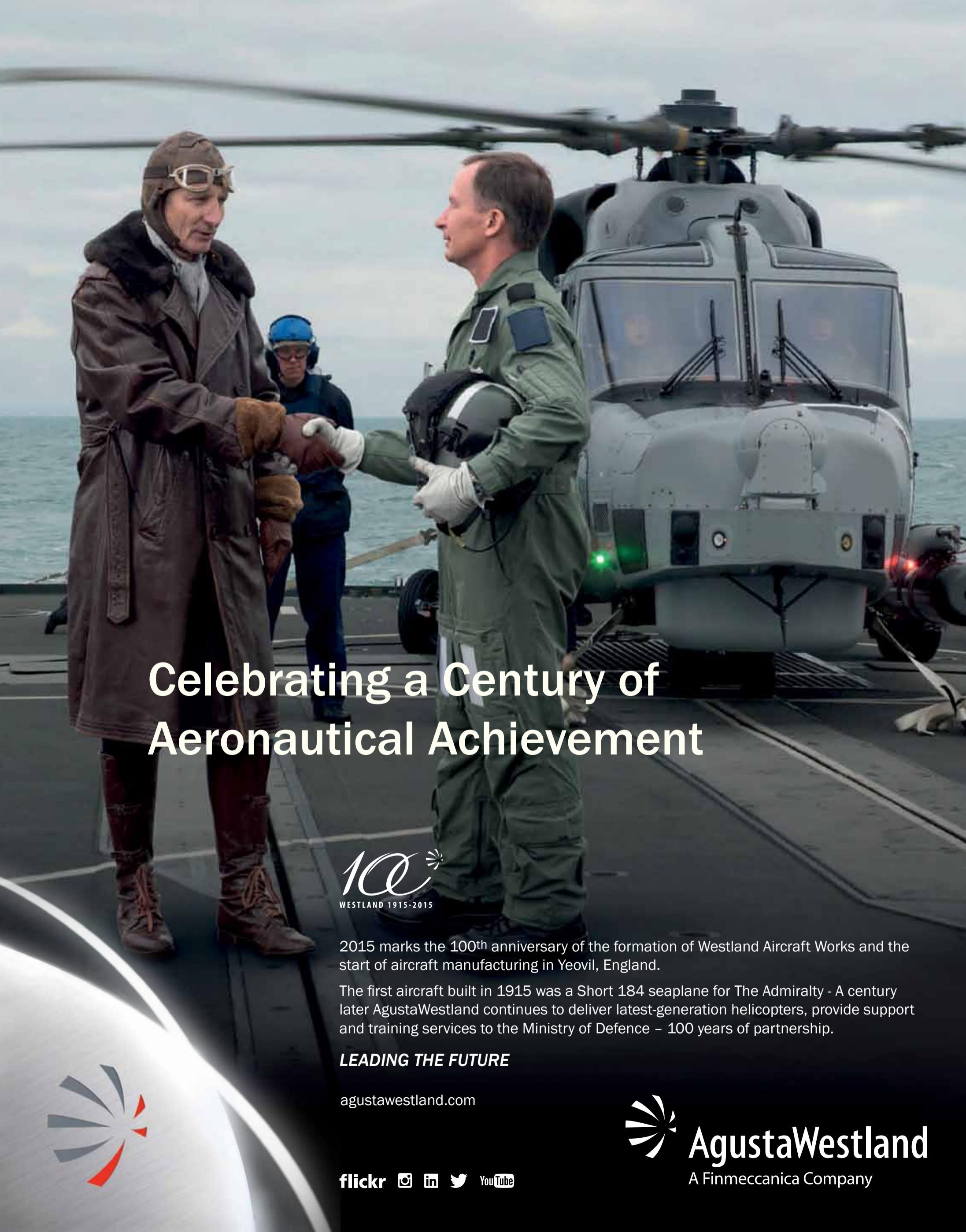
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VOODOO MAGIC

ACTUALLY, there's no magic to it. Just the best of British brains and brawn. And a lot of practice. And training.

We're now three months into the maiden deployment of the maritime Wildcat, the Fleet Air Arm's first new helicopter of the 21st Century (we're discounting the Merlin Mk2 which is an upgrade rather than a new airframe).

Not so Wildcat. Yes it looks like a Lynx. Or maybe a Lynx on steroids. It actually shares just 60 parts with its 1970s doppelgänger.

Which is why it's taken three and a half years from rolling out of the halls at AgustaWestland to the inaugural deployment aboard Lancaster. Limits set and parameters. Trials. Training.

And they're still learning.

On the journey south Lancaster and 201 Flight – who've nicknamed their helicopter Voodoo – worked through all vital secondary duties (what Lancaster calls her 'domestic requirements') for the first time. Day and night.

For AET Daniel Carter, 201's winchman (and one of the team of experts maintaining the helicopter), this was the first time he'd ever conducted winching – including stretcher transfers – at sea.

And then there's the crunchy stuff:

hunting submarines, surface contacts, making use of the Royal Marines sniper team, and slotting into foreign military forces.

There's been a lot of the latter. With the Americans. And the Mexicans. And the Columbians. Chileans too. It's been the first time these nations have got to see the Fleet Air Arm's new toy, so they asked for – and received – comprehensive briefings on Wildcat and were given a taste of what its impressive sensor suite can offer crews on the front line.

Although the two RM snipers are well versed in the use of the L115 rifle – and shooting it from the back of a Lynx – they'd not done the same in the more stable Wildcat.

So between Lisbon and the Azores the two lance corporals worked on their tactics and procedures before carrying out live firing for the first time from a Wildcat cabin.

Otherwise – and with the help of 825 Naval Air Squadron back at base in Yeovilton – the Flight and Lancaster are helping to write Wildcat's operational manual.

By mid-June, Voodoo had clocked up 43 hours and 18 minutes in home and foreign skies, clocking up a top speed of 130kts (150mph) on sorties up to two hours in length.

"We're working hard to develop how we integrate and operate Wildcat to ensure we make use of its maximum potential," said Lt Tom Johnson, Lancaster's gunnery officer.

"This has meant several changes and challenges from how we would have traditionally worked with a Lynx, but also means a much greater capability at our disposal."

Lt Dave Neyland, Voodoo's pilot and the flight commander, says from the time with Lancaster he and his team have learned that Wildcat offers much, much more to a frigate or destroyer than its predecessor – "a real force multiplier" in modern military parlance.

"It's part of our remit to work out how to extract everything we can from Wildcat's powerful suite of sensors," he adds.

All the Gucci wizardry crammed into £16m of military helicopter counts for nought if (a) you don't know how to use it or (b) it doesn't work.

So there's a well-honed team behind all the hi-tech kit.

In the cab, there's Lt Neyland (he received his Wings from the RN's last surviving WW1 veteran Henry Allingham back in 2006) alongside

his observer (navigator/weapons and sensors specialist) Lt Sammy Haynes.

They've trained for well over a year to be ready for nine months with the Red Rose – including taking Wildcat through its first Exercise Joint Warrior test off Scotland with HMS Dragon and the rigours of Operational Sea Training in the Channel in the autumn with Lancaster herself.

"Embarking Wildcat for its maiden deployment is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for me and my team," says Lt Neyland.

"Almost everything that we do onboard HMS Lancaster has never been done before and even though we're building upon our previous Lynx experience the knowledge that we're doing something for the first time does add an extra edge to our daily lives."

"Thankfully all of our experiences thus far have been positive and it is pleasing to think that the work we do now could last for many years into the future."

And on the ground, senior maintenance rating CPO(AET) Richie Mullett oversees a team of engineers: head mechanical (PO(AET) Leon Whitehead) and avionic (PO(AET) Ash Hinds) engineer; two junior mechanical

engineers (LAETs Matt Downey and Tom Bolton); a junior avionics engineer (LAET Gavin Lewis), four supervising engineers (AETs Mick Kinnear, Daniel Carter, Daniel Newnham and Joe Simpson); and one aircraft controller (LAC 'Chuckles' Collis).

All the engineers are from a Lynx background and have undergone a three-month conversion – ensuring they are up to speed on the much more complicated Wildcat airframe.

And evidently they are. On the first three months they achieved 100 per cent serviceability – impressing not only Lancaster's command and operations room team, but several of the foreign navies as well.

"Wildcat likes being at sea, proving its serviceability rate with no sorties lost due to faults," says CPO Mullett.

"As with all new assets in the Navy there are times when the full functionality of the kit needs to be proven and tested, gathering all types of engineering data."

"My team and I strive to get the most out of the Wildcat and prove its operation at sea in a multitude of roles."

"All the information we gather now will inevitably help upcoming Wildcat flights and the future of the Fleet Air Arm."





Picture: Chris Ison

P2000s enjoy Queen sweep

THEY'RE behind you.

One of the smallest ships in the Royal Navy's is dwarfed by the three gigantic liners of Britain's most famous shipping firm.

Patrol boat HMS Biter – plus her sister HMS Pursuer (out of shot) – were invited to join the Cunard Line for its 175th birthday celebrations on the Mersey.

For the first time Cunard's three Queens – Mary 2, Elizabeth and

Victoria – were brought together in the city where the company began operating in 1840.

It took three years of planning to get the liners in place and to choreograph their intricate 'river dance' – the three ships were just 130 metres (426ft) apart – in the Mersey estuary which remains a busy waterway, though not as congested as in Cunard's heyday.

As a result, Biter and Pursuer were called on to make sure that other

vessels didn't encroach upon waters occupied by the cruise ships – pictured left to right are Queen Elizabeth (90,000 tonnes, 2,092 passengers, 1,000 crew) Queen Mary 2 (150,000 tonnes, up to 2,620 passengers, 1,253 crew) and Queen Victoria (90,000 tonnes, 2,104 passengers, 900 crew).

On several occasions the P2000s (54 tonnes, five crew plus up to 14 students) were called on to 'interdict' and move some overly-eager craft out

of the way – the two patrol boats were ideal for the role as they were large enough to be intimidating to other small vessels on the Mersey, but fast and agile enough to move freely and quickly around.

It was all played out in front of more than one million spectators taking advantage of the May Bank Holiday.

"Our role on the day ensured that the complex manoeuvres undertaken by the Queens were not compromised

by over-exuberant spectators on the water," said Lt James Smith, who was enjoying his final day at the helm of HMS Biter.

"It was a pretty amazing way to bring to a close my time in command of Biter.

"The scale of the Queens compared to my ship was spectacular – Queen Mary 2 is over 2,500 times larger than us, and without doubt I had the best view of the whole event!"

Diamond's drone ranger

A TINY drone is guided home after scanning the main mast of destroyer HMS Diamond as the Royal Navy tests remote-controlled aircraft to survey its fleet.

Trials have been carried out in Portsmouth Naval Base to see whether the small craft can produce a high-quality survey of its ships – and in particular hard-to-access sections.

Normally cherry pickers or a tower of scaffolding is erected around the mast of a Type 45 destroyer if engineers want to inspect the state of the structure, which rises more than 100ft above the waterline and carries the Sampson radar (the 'spiked egg' on top) which acts as the eyes of the Sea Viper missile system – the Royal Navy's main weapon against air attack.

Erecting scaffolding can take days or weeks and even when using a cherry picker the ship has to be turned around at the jetty for a thorough inspection of the mast.

With a Remotely-Piloted Aerial System – as the RN likes to call drones – a quick inspection can be carried out in 30 minutes (you still have to erect scaffolding to carry out work if it's needed, however).

First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas has called on the RN and industry to innovate above, on and below the waves when it comes to 'maritime autonomous systems' – a call answered by the MOD's Maritime Combat Systems In-Service Management Team based



at Abbey Wood near Bristol.

Although the craft tested above and around HMS Diamond weighs just 2.5kg, it can withstand winds of up to 30kts – and found itself buffeted by gusts approaching that speed while being tested.

The camera takes either high-resolution stills or video footage of the area inspected and the imagery can be in the hands of engineers within minutes of landing.

"It's a long way up the mast of a Type 45 and managing the material state of the cutting edge systems at the top is a challenging but essential task," explained Lt Steve Lovatt, who used to serve in Diamond's sister HMS

Duncan and initiated the trial.

"This is normal business in the oil and gas industries when they're inspecting rig. It's quick, cheap, you could do it wherever the ship is, the results are with you in minutes.

"But there's huge long-term potential, well beyond inspecting masts or even the hull, which can be explored as the technology matures."

There will be more trials involving this and other unmanned technologies over the next 16 months in the run up to a Joint Warrior exercise in Scotland in the autumn of 2016 when there will be a major demonstration of automated naval systems.

Picture: LA(Phot) Dan Rosenbaum

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Echoes of Jutland

THIS colourful three-dimensional image belies the horrors played out here in an instant one Wednesday afternoon 99 years ago.

This is the wreck of HMS Invincible, blown up during the greatest naval battle fought in European waters in the 20th Century.

For the first time, the Royal Navy has surveyed the twisted and battered remains of the ships it lost on May 31 1916 at the Battle of Jutland using 21st-Century technology.

Ahead of the battle's centenary next spring – which will form the focal point of the Royal Navy's Great War commemorations – survey ship HMS Echo has spent a week scouring the floor of the North Sea with her state-of-the-art sonar suite.

The result: fresh understanding of the condition and layout of the Jutland wrecks after 99 years below – and for the ship's company of HMS Echo greater understanding of the sacrifices made by British and German sailors.

Two hundred and fifty warships from the two navies clashed from the afternoon of May 31 1916 until the small hours of the following morning.

When it was over, 25 ships – 14 of them British – were at the bottom of the North Sea and more than 8,500 men were dead, three quarters of them Britons.

More than 1,000 of those Royal Navy dead were killed when battle-cruiser Invincible was torn apart after a German shell plunged through the roof of Q turret. The resulting fire detonated her magazines.

Invincible's death – described by one witness as "an astonishing sight, probably unique in naval warfare" – provided the iconic sight of the battle.

"Several big explosions followed, great tongues of flame shot out from her riven side, the masts collapsed, the ship broke in two, and an enormous pall of black smoke rose to the sky," recalled Lieutenant William Chalmers, who watched Invincible blow up from the bridge of HMS Lion.

"One moment she was the proud flagship, full of life, intent on her prey; the next she was just two sections of twisted metal, the bow and the stern standing up out of the water like two large tombstones suddenly raised in honour of 1,026 British dead."

A dozen miles from the wreck of the Invincible Echo surveyed the remains of cruiser HMS Defence – her bow glowed red above the surface for several minutes before sinking.

Nearly a century on, it remains separate from the rest of the hull.

Further south, and blown to smithereens, Echo found what is left of battle-cruiser HMS Queen Mary, which suffered the same awful fate as Invincible.

Her cataclysmic demise prompted the famous remark of Admiral David Beatty, commander of the battle-cruiser force: "There seems to be something wrong with our bloody ships today."

Echo visited the 21 of the 25 sites where Jutland wrecks were believed to be – based on previous expeditions, eyewitness accounts and contemporary charts – and found nine hulls positively identified as vessels lost in the battle.

They also located the wreck of an oil rig support boat which sank following a fire in the 1980s.

At the end of the wreck surveying, the 40-strong ship's company held a service of remembrance before casting a wreath into the North Sea in memory of the British and German dead.

"The week has been a poignant reminder of the sacrifices the Royal Navy made in protecting our nation during World War 1," said Echo's Commanding Officer Cdr Phillip Newell.

"The loss of nearly 10,000 sailors over two days seems unbelievable today, and I'm very humbled to have surveyed the wrecks of both British and German warships where so many men lost their lives."

Nick Hewitt, an historian with the National Museum of the Royal Navy aboard Echo for the work at Jutland, said the week surveying the battlefield of 1916 had helped to "build a picture of one of the greatest naval battles in history."

He continued: "The condition of the wrecks varies enormously. Some have suffered badly from post-war attempts to salvage them, but others are astonishingly intact."

"HMS Defence in particular was 'reduced to atoms' according to one contemporary account, but the wreck was complete, upright and immediately recognisable by the distinctive profile of her secondary armament, still trained outboard towards her foes a century after the battle."

All the data will be provided to the UK Hydrographic Office in Taunton to allow them to update maritime charts used by most of the world's seafarers, while the week of surveying was also recorded by a film crew from True North Productions for a documentary to coincide with next year's centenary.



AT HOME ON THE RANGE

THERE were bombs on beaches. On jetties. On warships. On coaches. On a ferry. And a seaplane.

Sounds horrific. Or it's the perfect busmen's holiday for the Royal Navy's bomb disposal experts.

And for Americans. And Australians. Australians. Belgians. Dutch. Swedes.

All accepted the invite to spend a few days blowing up stuff in Canada (and, let's face it, who wouldn't?) above and below the waves, honing their skills dealing with the threat of terrorist bombs.

Teams from more than half a dozen nations converged on Victoria off the Canadian west coast for Ardent Defender, which teaches military and civilian technicians the latest methods of neutralising explosive devices – and the latest threats they might encounter.

Eleven sailors from Fleet Diving Unit 2 – one of three specialist Royal Navy teams who are ready to move around the UK or world at short notice to deal with the threat of mines and explosive devices – flew out to British Columbia.

Their expertise is neutralising Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) placed in, under or close to ships and harbour infrastructure.

They found limpet mines fixed to the hulls of Canadian warships. Makeshift mines floating in the cool, clear waters of Esquimalt Bay. There were pressure-cooker bombs – similar to those used in the Boston marathon atrocity. Bombs rendered safe using disruptors (they fire a jet of water into a bomb's

electronic circuit), or with the help of Dragon Runner, the RN's small remote-controlled robot, or by the skill and bravery of experts in bomb suits.

Bomb disposal isn't just about safely disposing of, er, bombs – courtesy of personal skill and bravery and a variety of specialist equipment. It also entails gathering as much forensic evidence and intelligence as possible.

"This is the first time I've been involved in such an intense and challenging exercise. The chance to work with so many other nations and agencies, so far from home, has been really interesting," said AB(D) Kieran 'Charlie' Dimmock.

"It's also been extremely rewarding, especially when I was acting as part of a 'high-assurance underwater search team' – we had a good idea that a device had been planted. We had to locate it within a certain time frame, and mark it."

It was also the first chance he'd seen No.1 operators – those in blast suits who perform the 'long walk' up to bombs to disable them – in action; in the Royal Navy it's a job performed by an experienced technician with the rank of a petty officer at least.

"All the nations have similar equipment and do the job in a similar way, but the British are held in high regard due to the fact that we've been the leaders in bomb disposal due to lessons learned from Northern Ireland and all the bombs placed over the years by terrorists," said Lt Cdr Sean 'Central' Heaton, FDU 2's Officer-in-Charge.



● Lt Cdr Sean 'Central' Heaton makes the 'long walk' down to the waterfront to deal with an IED

"The water off Victoria is very similar to Scotland as it is clearer than most harbours, but colder than the south coast of England."

British dive teams try to make three or four international exercises each year, such as Northern Challenge, hosted in Iceland, or RIMPAC, hosted by the US Navy in San Diego. Ardent Defender is a regular fixture on the diving unit's calendar, although the location shifts around Canada; this year it fell to the

Canadian military's Pacific forces in British Columbia.

"Ardent Defender gives the Royal Navy a unique opportunity to exercise with a diverse collection of teams from a multitude of different countries and agencies," said Lt Cdr Ben Stait, Commanding Officer of the RN's Fleet Diving Group – the parent formation of the three units.

"To be able to conduct tasks on unusual types of vessel and infrastructure will help us to improve our standard operating procedures and give greater reassurance to our ships and submarines when conducting operations in overseas locations."

Meanwhile in Nigeria... the RN's divers shared their experiences of hunting for terrorist devices in harbours and on ships when they spent a fortnight with the Nigerian Navy in Lagos.

The African divers want to build up their underwater force protection abilities – making sure harbours, berths and jetties are safe, and no explosive devices (home made or limpet mines) are fixed to the hulls of ships.

So a five-strong team – four sailors, one soldier – from the Defence Diving School on Horsea Island in Portsmouth flew to West Africa.

They found conditions challenging in and out of the water – high temperatures and humidity on the surface was replaced by zero visibility once dived and the very real prospect of bumping into something unfriendly in the water. Each morning's diving began with boats driven around the site to scare off the

local crocodiles.

The Brits also found their Nigerian counterparts eager – and quick – to learn the vital underwater arts and, by the end of training, were able to search their largest ship, NNS Aradu, inside the 20-minute target time, finding and marking the exercise devices placed by the British training team.

The British divers also offered their advice on the use of re-compression chambers and diving incident management.

"The Nigerian divers were really keen to learn and proved to be great students," said Lt Cdr Mick Beale, who led the training team.

"It was also good for our lads to experience diving in an environment that they wouldn't usually come across.

"The visit was a great success – not only for the diving training achieved but for the wider defence engagement as it helped to cement the excellent relationship between the Nigerian and Royal Navies."

This was the first time the UK has conducted diving training in Nigeria and a strong bond was quickly forged between the two diving schools and more joint training is planned.

"Training in Nigeria was certainly different from Horsea Island and around the UK but it was a fantastic experience and the Nigerian divers were great to work with," said instructor LD Gavin Speer.





Pictures: LA(Phot) Guy Pool, FRPU East

Yacht club raid tribute to Sam



ROYAL Marines captured a yacht ramp at the Royal Southern Yacht Club, Hamble, in a tribute to their fallen brother in arms, Mne Sam Alexander MC.

The marines, from 42 Commando, stormed the new ramp using a flotilla of Zodiac fast attack craft before securing the area and taking part in a ceremony to dedicate the landing point in Sam's memory.

The new facility, affectionately named "Sam's Ramp" will be used by the junior division of the Royal Southern, the "Splashers", of which Sam was a popular member in his childhood, to launch their sailing dinghies on to the Hamble River.

Sam's mother, Serena Alexander, is still an active supporter of the club and was clearly moved by the ceremony and the part played by the Royal Marines.

"For my family, it was a deeply moving occasion in celebration of Sam's life and courage," she said.

"Having the Corps there to pay tribute to him in such a heartfelt fashion was exceptional, and one that has touched us tremendously."

She added: "It gave us a great sense of pride, not just for Sam

but for the whole Royal Marines family who have honoured him so gloriously and continue to put themselves at risk for the sake of others."

Sam, pictured below left, was killed, aged 28, when he was struck by an improvised explosive device while serving with 42 Commando in Afghanistan, 2011.

He was awarded the Military Cross in 2009 in recognition of the bravery he showed in forcing the retreat of the enemy to protect a wounded colleague.

The service was also attended by the current commanding officer of 42 Cdo, Lt Col Richard Cantrill, who also received the Military Cross for his own actions during the war on terror in Afghanistan.

Lt Col Cantrill said: "Marine Sam Alexander was a brave and selfless Royal Marines Commando, with a real passion for life."

"His early days sailing no doubt contributed to his sense of independence, his determination and his adventurous spirit, and so naming this new facility in his honour is entirely fitting. I hope that it helps to inspire the next generation of 'Sams'."

42 Cdo are working towards assuming the role of Lead Commando Group in 2016.



A new military Bastion

PRINCE Harry joined families of the fallen and military personnel as one of the iconic memorials to the dead of Afghanistan was rededicated on British soil.

Nearly 2,000 people – including the Prime Minister David Cameron, Defence Secretary Michael Fallon, bereaved families, veterans and current Servicemen and women – gathered at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire to see the rebuilt Bastion Memorial Wall unveiled.

The original monument at Camp Bastion – hub of the UK operation in Helmand for most of the 13 years the nation was fighting the Taliban – became the focal point for remembrance in theatre.

It was taken down when combat operations ended in December, brought back to Britain and revamped so it could take its place alongside national and international memorials at the arboretum.

Among the family members invited to the rededication was Sean Augustin-Wood, the father of Royal Marine Lt Oliver Richard Augustin of 42 Commando, who was killed by a home-made bomb on patrol in the Loy Mandeh area of the Nad e Ali district in 2011.

"As a family we feel the memorial is a fitting tribute to those that made the ultimate sacrifice," said Mr Augustin-Wood. "It stands as a focal point for all those whose lives changed dramatically through injury and is a place of reflection for the thousands of Service people and their families who lost friends and family, but only time will heal their scars."

Maj Kate Philp of the Royal Artillery lost her left leg below



● Prince Harry salutes as the reconstituted memorial wall is dedicated

Picture: SAC Rich Dudley, RAF Cosford

the knee due to an improvised explosive device blast damaging her vehicle when serving with 29 Commando Regiment RA in 2008 supporting the Royal Marines. She was invited to give a reading at the investiture.

"This was an important time for us to pause and reflect on the conflict in Afghanistan," she said. "The National Memorial Arboretum is a fitting place to house collective memories of those we have lost. Remembrance is a very personal thing but being able to come together and share such a beautiful, calming memorial brings us a few steps closer to finding peace with what we've been through."

Up to seven members of each family of those killed in Helmand were invited to attend the service alongside members of all three Armed Forces, plus representatives of countries whose nationals are listed on the memorial, and from Afghanistan.

The Bastion Memorial will bring comfort to the family members and friends of the British Armed Forces personnel who lost their lives in the Afghanistan conflict – not least because they will know that the memories of their loved ones will live on in this place of remembrance," said Sue Freeth, director of operations at the Royal British Legion, the arboretum's parent charity.

The memorial contains elements of the original structure, such as the cross made of shell cases which has been placed on top of the cairn. The original memorial plaques have been placed inside the structure and material from the original wall has been inserted into the foundations, while an engraved map of Afghanistan has been mounted on the rear of the memorial, marking the locations where Britain's forces served during the 13-year campaign.

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Little ships, Big tribute

IF YOU'RE going to celebrate the achievements of the little ships of Dunkirk, you're going to need some small ships.

So HMS Trumpeter and Ranger were ideally suited (and sized) to strike out across the Channel in company with the eclectic flotilla of boats, bound for the French port of Dunkirk – exactly as the latter did 75 years ago to save an army.

The patrol craft were invited to join around 50 vessels – and a handful of veterans of the 1940 evacuation – for a ceremonial crossing of the waters between England and France, followed by four days of commemorations.

Trumpeter (based in Ipswich to give students from Cambridge universities a taste of the workings of the RN) and Ranger (based in Portsmouth for Sussex universities) met in Ramsgate, where 40 Phase 2 trainees from HMS Collingwood took part in an anniversary parade before being spread around the little ships for the Channel passage.

Whilst there are few warships of WW2 vintage still left, the Association of Dunkirk Little Ships counts more than 100 vessels on its list. Around half of them made the 75th anniversary crossing.

They did not rescue most of the 338,000 Allied troops from French soil and sand in May and June 1940 – warships, ferries and steamers achieved that.

But the 'big ships of Dunkirk' doesn't have much of a ring about it. And myths and legends invariably live longer in the memory.

The small ships encapsulate perfectly what has come to be known as 'the Dunkirk spirit' – the nation collectively pulling together at a moment of crisis.

In weather which perfectly mirrored that of late May 1940, the flotilla left Ramsgate accompanied for the initial stages of the journey by a Hurricane and Spitfire from the RAF's Battle of Britain Memorial Flight (its Lancaster didn't put in an appearance – but then neither did it in 1940, for it didn't enter service for another two years).

With three quarters of a century having

passed since the evacuation, veterans of Operation Dynamo are few in number; two, both in their mid-90s, sailed across with the returning flotilla.

The Royal Standard billowed in the spring breeze aboard Trumpeter as she carried Prince Michael of Kent the 45 miles to France.

He's honorary admiral of the little ships association and took the helm of the patrol boat briefly to show off his seafaring skills. An enthusiast of speed, he would have gladly throttled up the recently 're-engined' P2000 for a full-speed 22kt crossing... ...except that the little ships were limited to a leisurely 6kts...

Anyway, several hours later, and once alongside in the Bassin du Commerce in Dunkirk's rebuilt port (it was wrecked in 1940 by the Germans... then again in the final year of the war by the Allies as they tried to re-take it), the ships' companies and Collingwood sailors played their full part in three set piece ceremonies, as well as generally getting into the Dunkirk spirit.

Among the services of reflection, one on the sands at Bray, half a dozen miles east of the French port.

It was here, around 6.30pm on May 29 1940, that Lt Cdr B R Booth ran HMS Crested Eagle aground. She was afire from bow to stern.

A 15-year-old paddle steamer, used to running excursions down the Thames from the capital to Southend, Clacton and Felixstowe, she had been pressed into service under the White Ensign as an anti-aircraft ship in March 1940.

On May 28 she was ordered across the Channel to support the evacuation effort, arriving at Dunkirk's East Pier the next morning.

She spent the day taking troops on board before pulling away, heading east on one of the routes assigned as part of the evacuation.

The Crested Eagle was at sea no more

than 30 minutes before a swarm of Stukas pounced. The first stick of bombs missed, but then the 1,000-tonne wooden vessel was struck by at least three bombs, which ripped into her fuel tanks causing an immediate, terrible conflagration which killed an estimated 300 of the 600 troops aboard.

Today, at low tide, the sea recedes and reveals all that is left of the once blazing hulk, some twisted metal rusting remnants.

Under peerless skies, veterans, dignitaries, sailors present, sailors past, Britons, Frenchmen gathered around a memorial plaque for a beachhead service for those 300 souls.

For Trumpeter's CO Lt Chris Chew from Skipton in North Yorkshire, as well as participation in a national act of commemoration, this was a personal pilgrimage.

Seventy-five years ago, his grandfather, Acting Sergeant Arthur Atwood, found himself separated from his platoon in the chaos of the German advance and began to make his way towards the Channel ports, eventually linking up with other stragglers. He was picked up off the beaches outside Dunkirk by a fishing smack and brought back to the UK.

"I wish I could have done this five years ago with him. Sadly he passed away a couple of years ago at the age of 100," said Chris.

"He would have loved the atmosphere of the weekend – everyone knew the history of the evacuation and was talking about it, sharing their knowledge. You couldn't walk 100 metres without bumping into someone with a Dunkirk story to tell."

"And that's really important. Within a few years, all the veterans will have gone. But their story will go on – that was one thing made apparent by the little ships. They are determined that events like this do not stop and that we keep passing down the accounts of the bravery, of what people went through during the war, to future generations."

His boat is in company with little ships once more now; with Pursuer, Biter and Explorer, HMS Trumpeter is Baltic-bound as part of the summer deployment by the university squadron.



pictures: la(phot) iuron wright





• Bugler Jamie Richie

Picture: Lt Cdr Gordon Whyte
(HMS St Albans)

Modern warship, historic drumbeat

THE spirit of Nelson was invoked as Portsmouth-based warship HMS St Albans undertook the Royal Navy's equivalent of pre-season training.

The Type 23 frigate secured the services of a Royal Marines Bandsman, Bugler Jamie Richie, complete in uniform from 1805, to carry out the call to action stations.

Bugler Richie 'beat to quarters', as was the style in Nelson's day, when ship's drummers would use the rhythm of *Heart of Oak* to signal that military action was imminent.

The step back in time came as HMS St Albans completed her Operational Sea Training off Devonport with a final inspection during a Thursday War.

Personnel responded to the call to action stations as Bugler Richie marched along the deck before proceeding to the starboard bridge wing, where he continued to 'beat to quarters' as the inspection team from Flag Officer Sea Training arrived onboard.

"It was a fantastic day," said Bugler Richie.

"It's not very often we get the opportunity to come onboard ships and take part in something like this."

Bugler Richie remained onboard St Albans to play the role of a casualty during the Thursday War, when ship's companies have to prove they can cope with simulated air and sea attacks and battle damage.

HMS St Albans successfully passed her inspection and is now back in Portsmouth.



• The HMS Heron team on their way to victory in the Brickwoods Trophy at the HMS Collingwood Summer Show



Sports Officer appointed

THE Royal Navy has a new Sports Development Officer – Netball, Swimming and Female Participation, who brings with her a wealth of experience in the sports development field.

Emily Loftus (*above*) has been working in the industry since finishing her degree in 2006, and has worked at local authority level, with the County Sports Partnership (CSP), the National Governing Body (NGB) and now the Royal Navy.

Her role is fully funded by the RN & RM Sports Lottery, and Emily is employed through the NSSC (Naval Service Sports Charity), whose vision is to help sailors and Royal Marines live healthier and fitter lives through the opportunity to participate in regular sporting activity at all levels.

The other side of the role is to put together a strategy to look at increasing female participation in the Naval Service.

Emily will work with Royal Navy Sports Officers and other Naval staff to gather information about female participation and promote and develop female sport and physical activity.

The vision of the strategy is to inspire more females to be more active, more often, and enjoy quality sporting and physical activity experiences throughout the Naval Service, with the mission to increase participation levels of females taking part in sport and physical activity.

The strategy will contribute to the overall PDev Strategic Framework to strengthen and enhance the resilience and resourcefulness of Naval Service personnel, their families and the wider community, maximising the number of personnel 'Fit For Task, Fit To Fight and Fit For Life'.

As part of the strategy Emily is creating a campaign using everyday Royal Navy women to promote sport and physical activity, using different language, which is a little tongue in cheek, but ultimately to show women it's ok to look the way you do and remove that fear of being judged.

It is about getting women and girls moving, regardless of shape, size and ability, making the campaign real and relatable to Royal Navy women, like the Sport England initiative 'This Girl Can'.

The campaign will speak to women as one of them, to be encouraging and supportive using normal women of normal ability levels, showing that the more you do the more confident you become.

Emily is looking for inspirational ambassadors who have had sport and/or physical activity transform their life.

If this is you or someone you know, please get in touch via NavyPers-TemeraireRNS07@mod.uk

Heron regain title

FROM a Merlin to a bald eagle, from a Master Blaster to a Mod 1 4.5in gun – the HMS Collingwood Summer Show was an eclectic affair.

The Merlin was on display in a car park, while the bald eagle (along with a vulture, a barn owl and others) flew low over the heads of onlookers on an adjacent field.

The Master Blaster was a stomach-churning ride at the free funfair, while visitors were allowed a glimpse inside buildings and simulators, including those for ships' weapons systems.

But the soundtrack to the day was the rattle of metal-clad wooden wheels on tarmac as 24 highly-trained and motivated teams of 18 ran for glory in the RNRMC Field Gun competition under the steely gaze of Battery Commander WO Don Shaw.

Indeed, so many teams entered this year that a relic of the days of the Command Field Gun competition had to be dragged back into active service.

With two B teams also competing, a total of 22 guns and limbers were required, but only 21 were available.

So a gun and limber that was lying unused in a shed was dragged out and modified from Command configuration to Brickwood Trophy specification by HMS Collingwood's armourer Stephen Johns, who also voluntarily maintains other field guns at the Fareham base.

HMS Heron had already laid down a formidable marker by breaking the course record in a scoring run the day before, clocking 1m 17.69s, and although there were to be no

further record times on Saturday none of their rivals could touch the team from Yeovilton, who regained the main prize – the Brickwoods Trophy.

Heron's Field Gun Officer, Lt Graham Blick, said: "HMS Heron's crew has demonstrated superior commitment, coverage, discipline, determination, stamina and, above all teamwork.

"These are the exact qualities, spirit and 'fighting ethos' required of our people serving all over the world.

"None of this would have been possible without the support of our Command and sponsors BMT Isis, Lockheed Martin, SERCO and Thales."

Runners-up (thereby winning the Brickwoods Cup) were Portsmouth Naval Base, just ahead of 7 Bn REME (who won the Defence Trophy) and competition debutants 42 Cdo RM, Devonport and HMS Sultan A took the final two places.

Heron also took the Powersport Cup (best aggregate), the Fleet Air Arm Trophy and their record-breaking run took the Powerful Cup for fastest run.

HMS Raleigh won the Plate 1 final – the Silver Jubilee Cup – ahead of the Defence Medical Service (W), Seahawk, the Maritime Reserves, Neptune and Collingwood A, while the Royal Engineers took the Sports Lottery Cup for winning the Plate 2 final, ahead of Cdo Logs Regt, HMS Queen Elizabeth (both making their debut), Naples, MOD Corsham and Sultan B.

BRNC won the laurels in the Plate 3 final, leading home RAF Cosford, Collingwood B, MOD Abbey Wood, 29 Cdo (their first appearance) and Gibraltar.



• The Big Noise Samba Band in action

Other prizewinners were Lt Dave Bebbington RN (RNRMC Trainers Trophy), Devonport (Devonport Command Trophy), Portsmouth (Portsmouth Command Trophy), Neptune (Scotland Command Trophy), debutants HMS Queen Elizabeth (Fleet Trophy) and HMS Sultan B (Roaring Meg).

Fourteen of the teams benefitted from a training uplift of £30,000 grant from the RNRMC in preparation for the iconic event.

And the public not only showed their support for the competitors on the day but also the Royal Navy's charity, raising over £500 through bucket collections.

The Brickwoods competition began in 1907, the same year as the Inter-Command version. Both were based on the exploits of a Naval brigade which dragged heavy ship's guns, hastily adapted for land operations, to help raise the siege of Ladysmith during the Second Boer War (1899-1902).

While the Inter-Command thrilled spectators at the Royal Tournament until the 'Last Run' in 1999, the Brickwoods was a streamlined version of the competition for teams based in the Portsmouth area.

It was opened to teams from other regions in 1975, and is now open to all – overseas bases,

Army, RAF and civilian teams all now enter the arena.

And while the historic contest still pulls in the crowds at Collingwood, it was not the only attraction on a hot, breezy day.

More than 7,000 people came through the gates to see what goes on behind the wire – and it was a chance for groups with close ties to Navy's Weapon Engineering and Warfare Training establishment to play their part.

Groups like Warsash Sea Cadets, who use sports and ceremonial facilities on the base and were delighted to support the open day.

"It has been a really good day," said Lt Tony Thurgood, CO of the unit which manned a stall with eight cadets and a number of adult volunteers.

"We have been interacting with the local community and there has been a lot of interest from the public in the unit.

"As the only Sea Cadet unit in the borough of Fareham, we have had a really strong relationship with HMS Collingwood in recent years, and it is good to be able to give something back to the base on a day like this."

The show also featured display teams, the Portsmouth Military Wives Choir, the Royal Marines Band HMS Collingwood and the Solent Dog Display Team, amongst other attractions.

Capt Andy Jordan, CO of HMS Collingwood, said the show was an opportunity for the largest Naval training organisation in Western Europe to show the general public what goes on behind the fence.

"It has been a wonderful day – you couldn't have asked for better in terms of weather," he said.

Capt Jordan added that the show also supported a number of charities, many local but some with military links – money would be sent to the Nepalese earthquake fund to reflect the connection with Gurkha members of the Guard Service, for example.



• Cadets enjoy a ride at the HMS Collingwood Summer Show funfair

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ACES HIGH NOTE

MOUNTS Bay, Cornwall, 10.45am, Thursday May 21 2015.

If you weren't there, well you missed it. Unless you were at Land's End around 11am. St Ives 15 minutes later. Newquay at 11.35am. Truro (11.45), Falmouth (11.50), the Lizard at midday and finally Culdrose ten minutes past noon.

And if you missed those – and other sites passed on the 150-mile, 100-minute loop around the south-western tip of the UK – well, then you definitely missed out.

Because this is a sight never to be repeated. There will not be a flypast of red and grey Sea Kings on this scale again.

This time next year, all will be out of service – as will their counterparts at HMS Gannet in Prestwick – as their variant of the Sea King (Mk5) bows out and their principal duty, saving lives, is taken over by civilians as part of a shake-up of the nation's search and rescue services.

With the end looming – SAR duties finish by the close of the year, decommissioning follows before April 2016 – the Culdrose-based squadron decided to mark their final birthday in their current incarnation with a 76th anniversary flight around their domain.

There should have been six Sea Kings with their trademark Ace of Clubs logo buzzing around Cornish skies.

And, to be fair, there were. It's just that

one was off on a shout, rather than joining its brethren in the formation flypast.

Still, five Sea Kings together makes quite an impression.

The good folk of Cornwall. They turned out in substantial numbers to wave 'thank you' to the passing helicopters.

Or spell it out, as the pupils of Illogan Primary School, on the outskirts of Redruth did... or beachgoers in Perranporth, who also had time to carve the ace of clubs in sands which the Sea Kings have touched down upon on many occasions.

With a domain extending some 200 nautical miles west and southwest of their base, 771 respond to 15 to 20 call-outs a month – rising to 30 typically in the summer as tourists find themselves in difficulty slipping down cliffs or floundering in the Bristol or English Channels.

With much of the technology designed by blokes called Bob and Ted wearing cloth caps half a century ago, the Sea Kings are very much old school; every hour in the skies demands up to a dozen on the ground.

So the squadron's CO Lt Cdr Richard Calhaem was full of praise for his engineers – who ensure one Sea King is always at 15 minutes' readiness to scramble (by day, 45 at night), and a

second on stand-by.

"To get so many aircraft in the air at once, was a mammoth task for the whole squadron. The engineers who've worked around the clock to make the aircraft serviceable especially deserve praise," he stressed.

As for the aircrew – two pilots, one observer, one aircrewman – they found the turnout in Cornwall's towns and villages "very humbling" said Lt Cdr Calhaem.

He continued: "We were not expecting such high numbers of people coming out to give us a wave. Some people had even put messages on the beach.

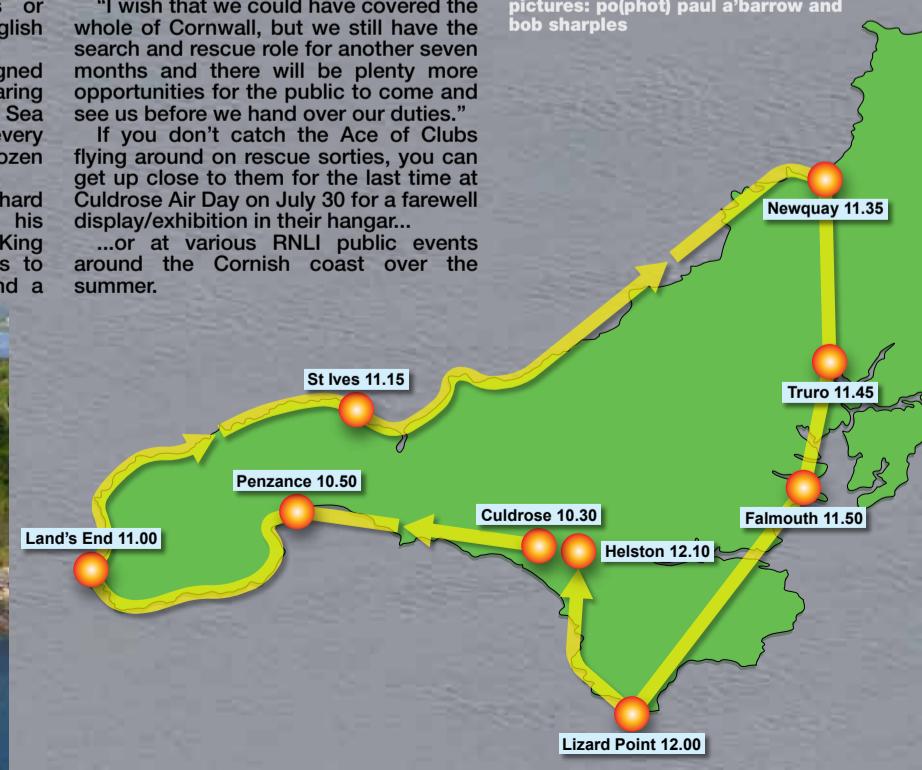
"On behalf of the whole of the squadron, I would like to say a big 'thank you' to everyone who took the trouble to come and see us fly past.

"I wish that we could have covered the whole of Cornwall, but we still have the search and rescue role for another seven months and there will be plenty more opportunities for the public to come and see us before we hand over our duties."

If you don't catch the Ace of Clubs flying around on rescue sorties, you can get up close to them for the last time at Culdrose Air Day on July 30 for a farewell display/exhibition in their hangar...

...or at various RNLI public events around the Cornish coast over the summer.

pictures: po(phot) paul a'barrow and bob sharplies





Lancaster's Bayou tapestry

THERE'S an old man called the Mississippi.

That's the old man that I want to be...

Be on, admittedly. And, if you're a member of HMS Lancaster's crew, you could have been.

The Portsmouth-based frigate accepted the invite to NOLA (New Orleans, Louisiana) Navy Week – six ships, six days, three nations, one party – as her nine-month Atlantic-Pacific-Atlantic deployment got under way.

The maritime event is a firm fixture in the US Navy diary.

The RN attends if there's a ship in the locality at the time (the last time was HMS Montrose back in 2012).

Joining Lancaster in the Big Easy: helicopter carrier/assault ship USS Wasp, destroyers USS Cole and USS James E Williams, the Coast Guard cutter Dauntless and Canadian destroyer HMCS Athabaskan.

Being invited to the Big Easy and getting there are two entirely different propositions.

The city sits nearly 120 miles up the USA's most famous river – a nine-hour transit from the Gulf of Mexico, beginning on a fog-shrouded dawn.

"As the fog lifted however, the bridge and upperdeck teams were treated to the beautiful sights of the Mississippi delta and endless swamplands, traditional paddle steamers and even a few alligators," said logistics officer Lt Cdr Jonny Moss.

More of a concern to 4,500 tonnes of steely grey messenger of death was the five knots of constant tidal flow in very confined waters which required maximum concentration throughout.

"The final stage had the bridge in absolute silence as the commanding officer brought the ship outboard of Canada's HMCS Athabaskan, which was berthed directly in the shadow of the iconic cantilever bridge spanning Ol' Man River.

And there she stayed for the next six days.

Time to relax? Not a chance.

Navy Week is so jam(balaya)-packed with events, there's barely time to catch your breath... starting with an old RN favourite: the flight-deck reception.

Well attended by local dignitaries, it provided the 200 sailors and marines an opportunity to thank their American hosts.

All of the ship's guests – including British Consul Andrew Millar, three American admirals and one US Marine Corps general – received Union Jack beads upon stepping aboard and were treated to live music, sterling company and plenty of sustenance.

The flight deck was filled with the

new Wildcat (see page 15) and an improvised water fountain formed with the help of local foliage and GRP domes, all of which provided an unusual but impressive backdrop beneath the lights of the Crescent City Connection (the official name for the river crossing).

NOLA Navy Week is much more than big ships with big guns hosting big receptions in the Big Easy.

There are parades and galas, fireworks, concerts, ship's tours.



A mainstay of the event is a cook-off with chefs from visiting ships joining forces with local culinary masters to produce a winning meal. In public. Against the clock.

Lancaster's CPO Frank Tingle was teamed with Patricia Kuykendall, who works for a New Orleans charity kitchen. Together, inside 30 minutes, they came up with pan-fried snapper accompanied by garlic and ginger king prawns, and served with a cucumber salad, tomato salsa and parmesan crisp.

As well as fighting the clock, they had to contend with Louisiana's (in)famous searing heat and humidity – the contest was staged outdoors at Spanish Plaza – which made it tough on the chefs and the ingredients (tricky keeping them fresh...).

Beautifully-presented and delicious as they were, the dishes served up by Frank and Patricia were edged off the winner's podium by those produced by a chef from the USS Wasp and his assistant.

While the chefs were toiling, the Red Rose's XV were sweating at Loyola University where an American football pitch had been adapted to host a game of rugby football.

Lancaster led until just before the half time whistle when the students (who train several times a week) drew level, then added a couple of tries in the second period to pull ahead and eventually win.

*You and me, we sweat and strain,
Body all achin' and racked with pain.*

Slightly less strenuous were ship's tours; the Red Rose's gangway was opened on four of the six days of the festival, with 1,300 New Orleanians filing up the walkway for a look around the 23 and chat to the crew.

Even though it's a decade since Hurricane Katrina tore through the city, the scale of devastation it caused means there remain large swathes of New Orleans in varying states of disrepair.

A total of 46 members of the ship's company – plus their American and Canadian counterparts – lent a hand at three schemes trying to bring some

normality back: Project Homecoming, Greening New Orleans, and the National Park Restoration Project.

The 'homecoming' team demolished a derelict property (by hand) as well as landscaping the sunken pavement surrounding it, allowing further development and improvements to be made to the neighbourhood.

The 'greeners' found themselves semi-submersed in a swamp for a while, eradicating some of the numerous invasive species of flora.

And finally the sailors assigned to the national park team continued the clearance of many diseased trees to allow younger, healthier ones to thrive.

And that was NOLANW 2015 wrapped up.

Having struggled with the tidal flow on her way into the Big Easy, the journey back down the delta was helped with a six-knot current pushing out into the Gulf of Mexico.

Once the frigate emerged from the confines of the river, she found the Cole, Wasp and James E Williams (pictured below) waiting to carry out some combined training – close formations, air defence, communications (where you have to get used to American nuances such as 'casualties'... which in RN parlance are actually machinery breakdowns).

Sailors from each of the three American ships had the opportunity to spend a day aboard HMS Lancaster and experience life on a British warship.

Among the Wasp men and women coming aboard the Queen's frigate, Rear Admiral Cynthia Thebaud.

The admiral commands the awesome Expeditionary Strike Group 2 – four helicopter assault ships (souped-up hybrids of Ocean/Bulwark), four amphibious assault ships (like Bulwark or Albion) and half a dozen amphibious support vessels (akin to the RFA Bay class) all led by the Wasp.

She was treated to a tour of the Type 23 and commented how professional and well trained sailors of the Royal Navy were.

"For HMS Lancaster, it was the perfect finish to an excellent week as we broke away from the American Strike Group and continued our deployment," said Cdr Peter Laughton, the frigate's CO.

"New Orleans Navy Week was a resounding success for both the city and the visiting ships – we were sorry to leave."

*And ol' man river,
He just keeps rollin' along.*



Bosnia



Northern Ireland



Sierr



May the force be with you:

JANUARY 1993.

Whitney Houston tops the UK singles chart with *I Will Always Love You*; Ford unveils its new Mondeo range of vehicles; Teletext is introduced on ITV and Channel 4.

And the Commando Helicopter Force begins what will become 22 years of almost constant operations around the globe.

The start of 1993 saw CHF take part in Operation Grapple in **Croatia/Bosnia** and Operation Palatine and Occulus in **Bosnia**.

During those operations, aircraft from 846 NAS came under fire 22 times, receiving 25 hits.

Low cloud across mountain ranges meant that crews were forced to fly through valleys to get casualties to hospital, keeping a sharp eye out for power cables strung across them which were not marked on maps.

Missions often had to be flown at night without being able to climb to a safe height and without the option of landing in fields in bad weather because of the ever-present danger posed by land mines.

In December 1993, 845 NAS assisted aid worker Sally Becker in flying 23 sick and wounded children and adults from the besieged cities of Tuzla and Visoko.

For CHF, eight years of continuous service to UN and NATO operations in the former Republic of Yugoslavia came to an end in 2001 when 845 NAS left Split for their home at RNAS Yeovilton.

The squadron conducted more than 600 medical or casualty evacuations and a wide range of humanitarian tasks, amassing more than 13,500 flying hours.

During the period, squadron personnel were awarded nine gallantry and Service awards, including three Air Force Crosses and three MBEs as well

as numerous commendations.

CHF returned to Bosnia in 2002 and again from July 2004 to March 2005 in support of UN peacekeeping operations.

WO1 Richard Byrne, who was drafted to 845 NAS as a leading aircrewman, headed out to Split, Croatia, in November 1994.

"Initially things were good, the camp itself was full of every nation working with the UN," he said.

"Unfortunately this was short lived and within a few days I was heading 'up country' to our Forward Operating Base, which was an abandoned steel factory in the small town of Gornji Vakuf (GV) about 25 miles west of Sarajevo.

"As we climbed from Croatia across the Kamenko border into Bosnia the temperature dropped significantly and the aircraft cabin filled with men putting on layers of clothes as the temperature plummeted to 0°C, finally hitting -10°C at GV.

"Within hours we were tasked for a twin aircraft CASEVAC at Tuzla (approx 30 miles north of Sarajevo). This was my first of many inductions into the 'real world' as we joined the Split cab and recovered the casualties, whilst under mortar fire from the north. As the weeks passed we frequently got sniped at by small arms (AK47) which swiftly became the norm.

"During our tour the siege of Sarajevo was still raging and locals lived under constant shell and sniper firing from the high ground north and south of the city.

"On several occasions we carried out mass CASEVACs, either from the bus station or Olympic stadium on the eastern edge of Sarajevo. Unfortunately this meant we had to fly into the siege from the west, down the aptly-named 'Sniper Alley' (reminded me of an Oxford street, don't ask me why!).

"During the summer of 1995 the temperature increased to plus 30°C. The end of the war was near and the local factions decided to increase their activities, resulting in the Srebrenica massacre. At the time we had no knowledge of this, we just happened to be on scene at the same time, watching thousands of females and children escaping to the west. We later learned that all the men had been killed."

From August 1999 to July 2007, CHF's three squadrons – 845, 846 and 847 – had personnel on continuous rotation for Operation Banner in Northern Ireland.

C/Sgt Paul Collacott found himself on Op Banner in July 2002, a mere three months after joining 846 NAS.

"Our role was to provide aviation support to the duty unit in the province and most of the time this was spent bouncing around the watch towers and patrol bases in South Armagh. It could be swapping over personnel, dropping off mail and newspapers, as well as under-slinging building stores for new towers or other vital equipment, and maybe the odd fruit machine.

"Some of the patrol bases brought their own issues – some being right in the middle of built-up areas and others would bring hockey balls thrown over the fence aimed at the rotor disc while we waited on the ground. Luckily most missed but not all.

"Overall, it was a great tour to find my feet and consolidate my skills on a busy front-line Jungie squadron."

March 2000 and 846 and 847 found themselves in **Sierra Leone** helping UN forces as civil war broke out.

WO1 Richie Waterton recalls: "Tasking was varied and when not on standby the crews would fly in support of 42 Commando to reassure the local

population and maintain security. This would often involve flying patrols to visit remote villages in the jungle to the east of Lungi airfield in a hearts-and-minds operation.

"On one particular night we were tasked to MEDEVAC a young woman who had been shot through the legs; a fairly typical example of the cruelty inflicted on the local population by the rebels. Another tactic they used was to remove limbs using machetes. Many of us saw the consequences of this when landing near some of the remote villages and children on crutches with one leg or with a missing arm would excitedly greet the aircraft."

Forward three years and the start of the second Iraq war – and the helicopter assault on the **Al Faw** peninsula – the largest operation of its kind since the USA in Vietnam 30 years previously.

Sea King Mk4s of 845 led the assault, while Lynx and Gazelle helicopters of 847 NAS directly supported 3 Cdo Bde.

Once the objectives on Al Faw had been secured the focus shifted towards Basra. 3 Cdo Bde and the Queens Dragoon Guards were supported throughout the capture of Basra by the Sea Kings, Lynx and Gazelles of 845 and 847 NAS.

From early January 2006, 847 NAS were again in Southern Iraq as part of Operation Telic.

Based at Basra International Airport, the squadron deployed 40 personnel and four Lynx AH7 to provide round-the-clock capability to Joint Helicopter Force (Iraq), JHF(I), for a six-month tour of duty. During this period, a Lynx was shot down over Basra by an air-to-surface missile, killing all crew and passengers.

During the same period, the Sea Kings of 845 NAS and 846 NAS



● Helicopters from 845, 846 and 847

joined their fellow squadron in Iraq. The units' presence meant that Royal Navy helicopters were providing the majority of aviation support to troops in the region under the command of the JHF(I).

847 NAS returned to Iraq between October 2007 and February 2008 operating the Lynx Mk9. During an extremely dynamic period, based in Basra, they successfully carried out a wide variety of tasks, ranging from



a LEONE



Iraq



Afghanistan



AL Faw



Philippines

● A snapshot of some of the overseas operations in which Commando Helicopter Force took part between 1993 and 2013



CHF marks 22 years of ops



aboard HMS Ark Royal

vehicle interdiction to providing ISR for ground convoys and patrols to MEDEVAC.

After the collapse of the Iraqi military and the end of formal resistance, the emphasis shifted from war fighting to stabilising the country. CHF squadrons regularly rotated aircraft and personnel into Iraq to conduct a variety of missions.

Sgt Anthony Russell was with 845 NAS and recalls witnessing the start of the Allied attack. "On March 20 I

walked out on to the flight deck when all of a sudden the night sky erupted into flame.

"A US Arleigh Burke destroyer ahead of us had launched its first salvo of Tomahawk missiles – the campaign of shock and awe had begun."

The invasion phase of Op Telic lasted from March 19 to April 28. CHF continued on operations in Iraq until late 2007 before being redeployed to Afghanistan and Operation Herrick.

Sgt Pete Kearney became the first Mobile Air Operations Team Royal Marines Reservist to deploy on Herrick.

"The heat and dust of Afghan took some getting used to and I wondered if my eyes would ever be the same. I knew though that I was lucky in that not only was I going to be going on heliborne ops with the Brigade Reconnaissance Force (BRF) but I would be living the dream in being able to come back from an op, have a hot shower, get the wets in and finish the day with a phys session at the main gym. Did I say that my grot (accommodation) had a fridge, TV and kettle? Proffers (dubiously acquired.)

"My first operation was an absolute mind-blowing experience, this was for real. This was live rounds, going both ways and inserting via one hell of a big noisy helicopter where there would be no directing staff in high-vis jackets.

"My normal routine saw me leave my RAF roommate sleeping comfortably in his pit whilst I made my way to the flight line, fully laden with body armour, rounds, rifle, helmet, smoke grenades and ladders.

"My MAOT role ended up being a very small part of my time on the ground as I was largely used by the BRF within the Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) lead section making use of my ground-to-air radio from a

forward position.

"As with all bootnecks, I wanted to do my best and therefore as a CMAOT to ensure the safety of the lads and reduce risk to aviation I did my utmost to find helicopter landing sites within walled compounds eventually developing a bit of a reputation for this.

"I was fortunate to have had the chance to work with the ANSF where not only did I find all the skills learnt over countless RMR weekends come in handy but also had the chance to see the ANSF foot-stamp method being employed as a definitive way of looking for IEDs."

The Royal Navy's Commando Sea King helicopters completed their final mission in support of Op Herrick on September 30 2011 and returned to their base at Yeovilton in Somerset to prepare for further contingency operations, whilst the CHF MAOT continued in Afghanistan until October 2014.

Humanitarian work has also featured strongly in the history of CHF.

While on Exercise Caribbean Fury, two Lynx and two Gazelle helicopters from 847 NAS were deployed with HMS Sheffield to help Nicaragua and Honduras which had been battered by Hurricane Mitch in 1998.

As well as rescuing more than 30 people, personnel from both 845 and 847 delivered more than 88 tons of food, clothing and building materials to the worst affected areas.

Eight years later 846 NAS supported Operation Highbrow, the evacuation of British civilians from Beirut. During their three-month operation, the squadron helped fly out more than 4,500 people.

In 2011, 845 and 847 were onboard HMS Ocean for the annual Cougar

exercise when they were deployed to take part in Operation Ellamy, the UK mission to enforce a United Nations' resolution to protect citizens in Libya.

The Sea Kings completed 99 operational missions, providing surveillance and intelligence to the Army Apache helicopter crews, and, thanks to the engineering team, they had a serviceability of 96 per cent.

In December 2013 personnel and three Sea King Mk4 helicopters from 845 NAS, supported by a MAOT from CHF headquarters, were deployed in response to the destruction left in the wake of Typhoon Haiyan as it tore through the Philippines.

Lt Aaron Cross was in Borneo in March 2013, retracing the steps of the Junglies in the 1960s.

"We first paid our respects at the Limbang memorial, the location of one of 42 Cdo's fiercest battles and were both humbled and surprised by the welcome we received from the locals following our 50-year absence.

"We then travelled further inland by road and river to Nanga Gaat – the fabled Junglie outpost as close to the Indonesian border as British Forces dared to venture. Fast-forward to November, and onboard HMS Illustrious, Lt Chris Mason and I shared in the worldwide shock at the destruction left in the wake of Typhoon Haiyan.

"The devastation we encountered was matched only by the remoteness of some of the islands most in need. Infrastructure for the supply of food and other supplies is simply fishing boats and other small craft – a concerning number of which lay capsized, impotently displaying their hulls skyward.

"We were evidently going to need every ounce of power and manoeuvrability our

Sea Kings could offer when delivering water, food, medicine and building supplies to beaches, mountainsides and jungle clearings.

"We were to become the custodians of life-changing aid for the crucial 'final mile' of the long supply chain to families and communities who would have otherwise been so unfortunate as to be beyond the reach of conventional means of disaster relief.

"As we steamed west, with HMS Illustrious's hangar emptied of its mountains of humanitarian aid, the Junglies humbly added the delivery of 10 tonnes of drinking water, 140 tonnes of food, 15,000 bales of tarpaulin and more than 300 disaster relief packs."

Last year CHF supported Operation Gritrock, helping the people of Sierra Leone during the Ebola crisis.

Lt Carl Isherwood was team leader in CMAOT and was tasked with selecting suitable landing sites for the three RN Merlins of 820 NAS.

"Having served with the Sierra Leone Maritime Wing for 18 months six years previously, a knowledge of the ground and of the Sierra Leone people stood me in good stead. A total of 30 landing sites were selected prior to the arrival of the Merlins with a further 17 selected after their arrival by reconnaissance from the air.

"Once the Merlins were flying routinely and using the helicopter landing sites the role for MAOT changed to that of training the British personnel in helicopter handling and assisting with under-slung loads as well as other specialist logistics tasks."

So 22 years on, although operations have currently ended for CHF, it is stepping into a new era as it replaces its Sea Kings with Merlins – ready for whatever the future holds.

Is this a Bagger I see before me?

YES, but not like any Bagger you've seen before.

This is a *Merlin* Bagger – Crowsnest to give it the official designation – and it should become the 'eyes in the sky' of the Fleet in about three years' time.

Whitehall today picked international defence firm Thales to provide the mission system and radar to slot into the Fleet Air Arm's Merlin Mk2 helicopters.

Crowsnest will replace the long-serving Sea Kings which have provided the Navy with its airborne early-warning ability for more than 30 years.

In its final version, the Sea King Mk7 Airborne Surveillance and Control (SKASaC, or 'skayzac') the veteran helicopter proved equally adept at tracking movements on the ground and on the surface of the ocean.

It's seen extensive action over Iraq and Afghanistan – responsible for helping ground forces to seize arms caches, drugs and terrorists – but is due to be retired in 2018 when the Sea King reaches the end of its active life after 49 years' service.

That same year new carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth begins trials with her F-35 Lightning II jets and will require forewarning of any incoming threats – hence the investment in the successor to the Baggers (so called for the big sack which contains the hi-tech radar).

Lockheed Martin UK will now complete the project's £27m assessment phase over the next 12 months working with Thales and AgustaWestland, who built the Merlin.

Thales came up with an updated, improved and repackaged version of the Cerberus tactical sensor suite currently in service on the Sea King Mk7.

Once a decision has been taken to move onto the manufacture phase, it should sustain around 300 jobs across the three firms in Crawley, Havant and Yeovil.

Once in service, the Crowsnest helicopters will join the rest of the 'grey' Merlin fleet at RNAS Culdrose in Helston.

Picture: Thales



Reward for Ebola efforts

SAILORS, Royal Marines, naval aviators and medics who helped to stem the tide of Ebola in Sierra Leone will receive a medal honouring their efforts.

Prime Minister David Cameron said more than 3,000 Britons had answered the call to help deal with the outbreak of the disease in West Africa "at considerable risk", and the nation owed them "a debt of gratitude".

Cases of Ebola dropped tenfold in Sierra Leone during the five-month mission by RFA Argus, her Merlin helicopters, surgeons and nurses, plus Royal Marines Commandos.

Three Merlins from 820 Naval Air Squadron from Culdrose flew 294 sorties in support of Operation Gritrock, codename for the UK Armed Forces' response to the outbreak.

They flew supplies and aid across Sierra Leone, while 1 Assault Group Royal Marines did the same in coastal regions (and provided force protection).

Argus' impressive medical facilities were not used to treat Ebola victims – that fell to centres ashore. But staff did provide blood to support the fight against the disease and were on hand to provide non-Ebola treatment for more than 400 Britons involved in the aid operation.

The medal will be awarded to both military and civilians who took up the fight against Ebola. More than 3,000 people are thought to be eligible for the medal, which will feature a flame on background depicting the virus and the words 'For Service: Ebola Epidemic West Africa'.

The first decorations will be issued this summer, with Mr Cameron due to invite some of the recipients to a reception.



Yeo-men and women on parade

EYES front... Leading Aircraft Handler Natalie Moon can't help grinning (it's her last parade in the Service so we'll let her off) as the men and women of RNAS Yeovilton celebrate their base's 75th birthday.

They did so by marching through the heart of nearby Yeovil – a privilege they have enjoyed for two thirds of the air station's history.

Some 500 sailors, Royal Marines and soldiers paraded through Yeovil town centre, where Mayor Cllr Mike Lock and Yeovilton's CO Cdr Jock Alexander were among those taking the salute in Yeovil High Street as one in eight of those employed at the air base exercised the Freedom of the Borough for the first time since 2010.

The Navy and Army personnel – as well as being

home to the Fleet Air Arm, the base is also used by the Army Air Corps' Wildcats – were cheered and applauded through the streets by young and old before a flypast of aircraft from the station.

Cllr Lock said that the bond "between the town and the air station is stronger than ever" while Cdr Alexander said that "wherever they are in the world, the men and women of RNAS Yeovilton are proud to have the support of the local community and an event like the freedom parade gives us the opportunity to show our thanks."

The base was established in June 1940 but it was 22 more years before Yeovil folk bestowed their highest public honour upon the station.

Its 75th anniversary commemorations continue on July 11 with a birthday-themed air day.

Prince of Wales takes a bow

THE forward section of Britain's biggest future warship is now outwardly complete after engineers successfully attached the final part of HMS Prince of Wales' bow.

After some exact calculations to get the centre of gravity

spot on, the 620-tonne block was raised by the enormous Goliath crane which dominates the north bank of the Forth and then put down on its final position on the front of the ship in the dry dock.

The upper bow has been

constructed in four huge sections, all built at the Appledore yard in Devon, then shipped to Rosyth, where Prince of Wales is taking shape in the same enlarged dry dock where her older sister Queen Elizabeth was pieced together.

NOW that's how to make an entrance.

Lt Cdr Charlie Fuller sets down Rescue 177 14 storeys above the ground at the stunning helipad atop Glasgow's new Southern General Hospital – dubbed the Death Star by locals – the first time the facility has been used.

After several training sorties, the distinctive red-and-grey Sea King Mk5 from HMS Gannet, at Prestwick, finally got the shout to recover injured casualties and land them on the metallic gantry for real – the patients thankfully were not seriously hurt.

The 'christening' of the pad came at the end of an exceptionally-busy period for the unit and its three rescue helicopters, which provide vital cover for the west of Scotland, north-west England and Northern Ireland.

Crews clocked up more than 220 sorties during the two-week period of the latest Joint Warrior exercise – the biggest war games in western Europe this year – when the Sea Kings flew 34

missions delivering personnel and equipment to participating ships and units.

"At the same time as hosting Joint Warrior, Gannet remains the busiest SAR base in the UK by some way," said Lt Cdr Fuller, Gannet's CO.

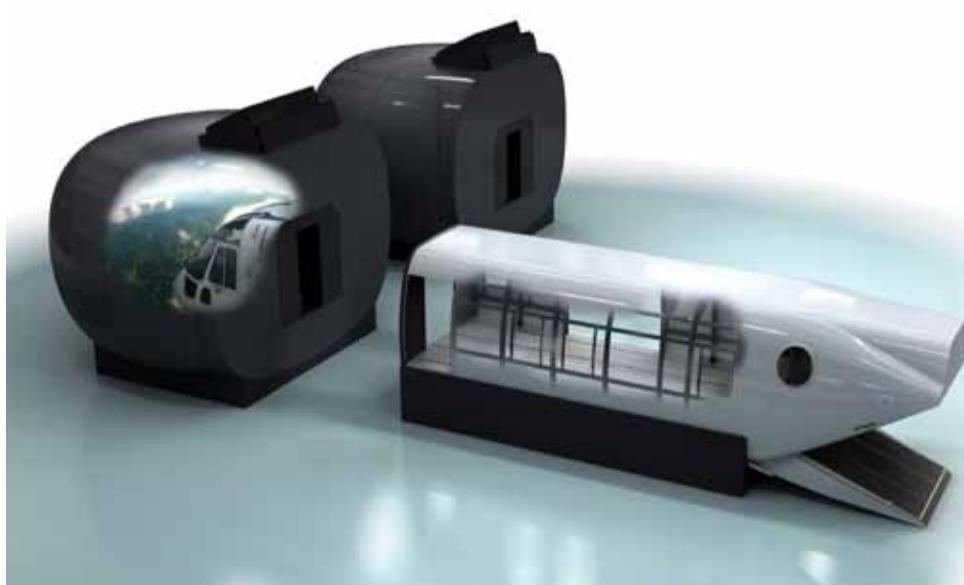
"We'd just achieved our 100th SAR job this year as the exercise came to a close and yesterday achieved four rescues in one day, over a period lasting almost ten hours."

Meanwhile in Plymouth... Gannet's sister SAR fliers from 771 NAS christened the new (and rather less dramatic) 'helicopter landing site' at Derriford Hospital.

The £1.75m floodlit pad replaces a temporary pad at 42 Commando in Bickleigh (a 30-minute drive away) and, before that, a small grassy area next to A&E which was just a set-down area for air ambulances.

As the principal trauma centre in the south-west, better facilities were needed to cope with an expected 400 casualties transferred by air each year.

Junglies ready to install new sim cadre



THESE futuristic-looking contraptions are part of the Junglie training system of tomorrow.

In two years time, the men and women who fly the Royal Marines into battle will be using these simulators – part of a £29m investment in preparing aircrews of the Commando Helicopter Force to operate their new Merlins.

State-of-the-art cockpit and rear cabin simulators will be installed at Yeovilton – the aircraft's home – as the force moves from the analogue age to the digital, retiring its venerable Sea Kings.

The first Merlin squadron, 846 NAS, has already arrived at the Somerset air base, and it will be joined later this year by its sister 845.

Pilots and aircrewmen in both squadrons have received their 'synthetic' training at RAF Benson in Oxfordshire as part of the transfer to the Fleet Air Arm of the Merlin Mk3 – distinguishable from their Mk2 counterparts by their colour (green not grey) and their rear ramps (for marines to clamber up with all their kit).

But over the next five years, the Mk3s are being converted into Mk4s – to 'navify' them for operations at sea (grey livery, folding rotor heads, improved landing gear, lashing points, and the ability to drop commandos into action by rapid rope) as well as upgrade the cockpit systems.

By the autumn of 2017, two 'flight training devices'

(cockpit simulators to you and me), one flight and navigation procedures trainer and a rear crew cabin trainer will be installed in the building which currently houses the Lynx simulator. Collectively, they form what the MOD calls 'synthetic training equipment'.

Sixteen new pilots and an identical number of aircrewmen are expected to pass through the new Mk4 trainers each year, plus fellow fliers undergoing refresher courses; simulator training for Mk3 crews will continue on the facilities at Benson until all the existing Merlins are upgraded in February 2020.

"The new synthetic training equipment will be a giant leap forward for the Commando Helicopter Force in its ability to train aircrews, bringing it into the 21st Century," said Cdr Steve Doubleday, who has overseen the force's transition from Sea King to Merlin and the move from Benson back to Yeovilton.

"A great deal of work has already taken place – with much more to come – to ensure that the product is high-end and meets not only our current needs, but also allows us to develop Junglie operations for years to come."

As for the (sad) demise of the famous green livery which has served the Junglie force well for decades, it's to fit in with 3 Commando Brigade's shift in emphasis from land to amphibious operations.



● The Royal Navy Historic Flight's Sea Hawk

Picture: Lee Howard Photography



● Sea Fury operated by the RNHF

Picture: LA(Phot) Guy Pool

WW2 stalwart back in the air 75 years after famous raid Let's hear it for Swordfish

THINK Battle of Britain and you think of the iconic Spitfire.

Think Battle of Taranto and you think of the Swordfish.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of both battles – with the Royal Navy Historic Flight aiming to pay tribute to Swordfish by flying two of the WW2 aircraft, something which has not happened this millennium.

Taranto, the Swordfish's equivalent of the Battle of Britain, saw 20 of the Royal Navy's aircraft drop torpedoes and bombs to demolish half of the Italian battlefleet – after flying at a laboriously slow speed the 170 miles from HMS Illustrious.

The attack was the first time that an enemy fleet had been defeated without ever sighting or engaging the opposing ships.

The Historic Flight, based at RNAS Yeovilton, has proclaimed 2015 the year of the Swordfish, with W5856, which hasn't flown since 2003, taking priority. Hours of work have been carried out on its Pegasus engine. New pistons, crafted by Cosworth Engineering, have been installed, along with new spark plugs. It is hoped that the second of the Flight's Swordfish, LS326, will also be airborne later this season.

"Swordfish went all the way through the Second World War and what the crews did was phenomenal," said the Historic Flight's CO, Lt Cdr Chris Götske.

"Pilots flew for six to seven hours in way-below freezing temperatures. The groundcrews were working without any protection in those conditions, it is quite amazing."

"It's not just the physical side but what they did with the plane. You had a plane with the speed of a car going up against a warship, they only did two miles a minute, and to look at what was achieved is phenomenal."

"The Taranto raid was amazing, the Bismarck, the Channel Dash with the Luftwaffe sitting over them, the Battle of Britain – the Swordfish really played its part and showed the Navy's can-do attitude of making the best out of what they have been given."

Last month Lt Cdr Götske was at



Buckingham Palace to receive the Air Force Cross from the Prince of Wales.

The award was for successfully landing his Sea Fury T20 after it developed a fault at RNAS Culdrose's airday last summer.

"I've been back to Culdrose a few times since then and will be at air day, if not in the Swordfish then in something else. The key thing about that day is that the T20, yes it did go wrong, but the plane didn't quit, which is testament to the ability of that engine."

"I've been lucky, I flew the Sea Fury in 2007 and the following year the Sea Hawk was available so flopped straight into that. I've been in the right place at the right time."

"You just need to think that these aircraft were designed in the 1930s, 40s and 50s and we are flying them now."

Lt Cdr Götske will be back at Culdrose later this month, perhaps in the Flight's two-seater DHC-1 Chipmunk.

The aircraft, which has undergone major refurbishment, including the replacement of its rear fuselage bulkhead, will take part in a number of displays this season. It is also vital in training new RNHF pilots in the fine art of tail dragging and display flying.

The RNHF owns three of the five remaining airworthy Swordfish (the other two are in the USA and Canada), along with a Sea Hawk and a Sea Fury (which remains in pristine condition in its hangar until the inquiry into the Culdrose incident is complete).

Sea Fury aircraft fought with distinction during the Korean War, helping to provide the spearhead of British Forces' ground attack air offensive operations.

One Sea Fury had the distinction of being the first United Nations piston engined aircraft to shoot down the much faster MiG 15 jet, and it remains to this day the fastest production single piston engine-powered military aircraft in the World.

The Sea Hawk was the Royal Navy's first truly successful fighter/ground attack jet aircraft and made the greatest contribution to the success of British ground attack forces during the Suez campaign in 1956.



● Some of the Historic Flight team in front of a Sea Fury. Back row, from left, Lt Cdr Mark Jameson (Swordfish pilot), Dave Skiddy (SERCO supervisor), Mick Jennings (SERCO Senior supervisor), Tug Wilson (SERCO supervisor), Lt Cdr Matt Tazewell (Swordfish observer from 825 NAS), and Lt Rich Bell (Swordfish observer from 815 NAS); Front from left, Lt Cdr Glenn Allison (Swordfish Pilot), Jessica Watson (SERCO apprentice), Howard Read (RNHF Chief Engineer, SERCO), Lt Cdr Chris Gotke (RNHF CO), Nick Bailes (SERCO supervisor and PO in the RNR), Fraz Fraser (SERCO senior supervisor) and Lt Simon Wilson (Swordfish pilot from 825 NAS)

Picture: Lee Howard Photography

funds for the Flight.

Lt Cdr Götske took off from Yeovilton in the Chipmunk, followed 20 seconds later by former RN pilot and now a pilot mentor, John Beattie, in a T-6 Texan.

They made the journey at around 2,000ft before descending to fly around the bowl-shaped course and complete a figure-of-eight movement.

The T-6 remained for some further aerobatics as Lt Cdr Götske returned to Yeovilton where he put the Chipmunk through its paces – pilots are required

to practise their displays every eight days to remain within the regulations. He was showcasing Chipmunk at RNAS Merryfield – a satellite airfield for RNAS Yeovilton – that evening.

"We only do certain manoeuvres which look good for the crowd," he said.

The key thing is to display nice and tightly in front of the public, it is all about what they will see.

"You need to maintain your energy and your experience depends on the aircraft. Fury and Hawk are fast whereas the Fish is slower so you need to display over the runway.

"We tend to perform barrel rolls and lazy loops and pull-overs rather than pull-throughs."

"We are promoting the Royal Navy and educating the public. We have such a proud history and of course we can operate off land and at sea."

The summer display season is extremely busy, there is little let-up for the RNHF as the small team of engineers carry out maintenance work.

Chief Engineer Howard Read said: "Our biggest challenge is having to comply with modern regulations despite having old aircraft."

"Spare parts are bespoke, there is very little we can use off the shelf and if we refurbish an engine it has to be fully accredited for use."

"It is purely a flying machine but with modern safety and communications equipment."

Next year the RNHF will make the short move to Hangar 15 near to the air traffic control tower at RNAS Yeovilton.

It will offer much more space which will enable the entire collection to be housed in one place. The Flight will also be joined by staff from the Fly Navy Heritage Trust, which raises funds for the Flight.

Aircraft from the RNHF will be appearing at events throughout this summer.

To keep up with the latest news visit the Royal Navy Historic Flight Facebook page.



● It is hoped that the RNHF will have two Swordfish aircraft flying this year

Picture: Lee Howard Photography



BALTOPS STUFF

WITH the setting sun glinting over the sparsely-vegetated dunes of Pomerania, Royal Marines move across the ranges of Ustka.

This, to the Polish Navy, is what Plymouth Sound and environs are to the Senior Service: its principal testing ground – the *Centrum Szkolenia Specjalistów Marynarki Wojennej* (Navy Specialist Training Centre).

Here, some 70 miles west of Gdansk not just Poles and Britons, but 700 troops and their attendant armour from half a dozen nations strode and rumbled ashore under the protective umbrella of American and Swedish jets, Lynx Mk8s and Apache gunships.

Thus did Baltops 2015 end. With a bang. Not a whimper.

The 43rd incarnation of Baltops (Baltic Operations) got under way from the Polish port of Gdynia ten days earlier in rather more sedate fashion with a masterfully-choreographed formation exercise.

It fell to the bridge team of helicopter carrier HMS Ocean – her flight deck lined with Fleet Air Arm Lynx, Army Apache gunships and an RAF Chinook – to choreograph the international Allied naval force mustered for Baltops 2015.

The group formation involved

bringing together 17 nations' warships – some less than 200 yards (182 metres) apart – and then moving them through a series of complex formations, testing their communications and navigational expertise.

Over the course of several hours – and in near perfect conditions – the team brought together amphibious assault ships, destroyers, frigates and minehunters for the complicated series of movements – the like of which have not been seen before with so many nations.

Coordinating the skilful operation was the Mighty O's specialist navigator Lt Cdr George Storton.

The 32-year-old from Bosham in West Sussex said he started researching and planning the various formations six weeks in advance.

"We had 49 ships taking part of all sizes and speeds and that meant a lot of evenings on the internet researching the vessels, looking at where they could sit in the running order and then sketching out different formations over and over again," he said.

"This was a massive communications piece as we had ships from several nations coming together on day one of the exercise.

"Many of us had never worked, or even spoken, before so we had to prepare for every eventuality. Fortunately the whole serial ran smoothly and I was filled with an enormous sense of satisfaction when it was over."

The impressive imagery of this fine naval sight was captured by LA(Phot) Luron Wright from a Chinook piloted by Flt Lt John Parry from RAF Odiham.

"It was a great opportunity to capture the opening of Baltops," said the helicopter pilot. "I've never had an opportunity like this to fly over so many ships from so many different nations; it was a real honour and an experience very few pilots will ever get."

Indeed.

They came to Baltops from Belgium. And Denmark. Estonia. Finland. France. Germany. Georgia. Latvia. Lithuania. The Netherlands. Norway. Poland. Sweden. Turkey. The United States. And the UK.

They came in their thousands (5,600 to be precise; Britain's contribution numbered just shy of 1,000 men and women).

They brought ships (three from Blighty – frigate Iron Duke and minehunter Quorn).

And they brought four dozen aircraft.

They came for some gunnery practice. And amphibious operations. A spot of air defence. Some international planning. A little anti-submarine warfare.

And they came for some minehunting.

In all these big exercises we always focus on the big ticket items. Your helicopter carriers. Your gunships. Your Royal Marines in full war paint screaming "Argghhh!" as they storm across the dunes.

Eyecatching. Earcatching. Sexy. Minehunting. Slow. Painstakingly slow. Not sexy.

But get it wrong...

Bang.

Helicopter carrier sunk. Gunships on the seabed. Landing craft on the sea bed. No commandos swarming across the sands yelling.

So an integral part of Baltops was clearing a path – 'ploughing the road' – for the invasion forces to move safely.

Some 50 practice mines were sown in the Baltic off Denmark and Poland...

...and the half dozen ships of Standing Mine Counter-measures Group 1 were sent in to deal with them, among them HMS Quorn, designed to deal with mines in shallow waters (and the Baltic mostly is shallow – average

depth about 180ft (55m)).

Having spent the three months leading up to Baltops working solely with the international assortment of small ships, the 40 crew of the Portsmouth-based warship relished the chance for the minnows to take their place among the big fish.

"An exercise on this scale is a real test for the team," said Lt Rob Coatsworth, gunnery officer of the Hunt-class ship.

"When you're under fire from aircraft and small attack boats and you still have to focus on minehunting to clear the way for the amphibious landing you're really putting all of your training into action."

Quorn's principal role was to render the main traffic routes off the coasts of Poland and Denmark safe. The dummy mines laid weren't entirely inert; one was packed with three quarters of a tonne of TNT.

"It adds an extra level of excitement to what we're doing, knowing that there are actually real objects down there that we are also looking for, you have to stay focussed 100 per cent of the time," said AB(MW) Luke 'Strawbs' Fields, who was staring at the sonar display





PICTURES: LA(PHOT) LURON WRIGHT

forever (sorry).

He and his ops room shipmates found the device containing 775kg of high explosives.

And well, it would be rude not to blow it up.

You could send a Seafox device down to place an explosive charge next to the mine to set it off.

Or you could put your divers in the sea (still only about 12°C even in mid-June).

You're right. Divers sounds more fun.

"When you get down there all of the training kicks in. It was a great experience," said AB(D) Richard Fisher who placed the charge to trigger the mine...

...and then (wisely) withdrew to a safe distance.

Bang.

Mines cleared. Time for the main event.

And so to Ustka, a small beach resort roughly half way between Kołobrzeg and Hel.

Deepest, sleepiest Pomerania.

But wait.

What's that coming over the horizon? Why, it's some Swedish CB90s (fast), Finnish Jehu-class landing craft

(fast), US Navy hovercraft (fast) and Royal Marines Landing Craft Vehicle/Personnel (er, slow).

And they're bringing ashore the 'combined landing force' of US, Finnish, Swedish and Royal Marines, some American paratroopers and some good old British matelots.

This wasn't just a workout for seasoned personnel, but also a test for those getting ready to enter the line of fire – chiefly young officers from the Commando Training Centre, who found themselves directing the actions of green berets on the rolling dunes west of Ustka.

Men like 2Lt Alistair Pound.

He worked in finance in the City. That didn't hit the spot. So he became a Royal Marines Reservist. That hit the spot. Just not enough. So he went the whole hog and joined full time.

"We landed on a beach head, carried out a raid, took them down and then returned to HMS Ocean," he said.

Which is not a bad day's work. Fellow trainee and 2Lt Nathan Buchanan added: "Being able to include other nations' ideas in our training is something we wouldn't normally get this early in our careers, so being on Baltops is a huge bonus.

"It's been a brilliant opportunity to engage with other forces and, despite concerns about language barriers, everyone uses English."

Capt Christopher Viggars, overseeing the officers' training, said the men could only benefit from the rich international nature of Baltops.

"Working with the US Marine Corps along with Finnish and Swedish Marines is great because it gives a lot more depth to what we normally do," he explained.

"We've added new aspects to our training which will help us down the line if we did have to do operations with people who work with different kit, people we don't operate with very often, and possible language barriers.

"If we went straight into an operation without practising, it wouldn't be very well organised."

Helping to get the trainee officers – and other marines – on to Polish shores by helping to direct the landings from Ocean's ops room was American marine 1Lt Chris Cavanaugh, who was impressed by how the different military forces meshed together.

"It was great to see how well we executed given the short amount of time of being together and planning for

such a large amphibious operation," he said.

"Seeing the synchronisation of the staff and the communication flow around everyone really demonstrated our ability to work together."

The impressive *pièce de théâtre* at Ustka was observed by many of Europe's political leaders – from British Defence Secretary Michael Fallon to General Philip Breedlove, the senior US Air Force officer who is NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe.

Gen Breedlove said he "could not be more impressed" by how the final set piece of Baltops played out.

Mr Fallon watched proceedings initially aboard Ocean, then shifted to the sands outside Ustka. He was as delighted as the USAF general with what he saw: an exercise demonstrating "what the Royal Navy does best" and demonstrating Britain's resolve "to defend and support our allies in the face of any threat".

Now three Royal Navy ships in the Baltic is good.

Six is better. Much.

As Baltops ended and the participants bomb-burst to their respective home nations, the RN's trio made for Kiel and its world-famous seafaring festival...

...which was also the destination of three P2000 patrol vessels making their way eastwards for their summer deployment, giving university students an extended experience of life on the go with the Navy.

Ranger, (Sussex) Charger (Liverpool) and Example (Northumbria) joined Ocean, Iron Duke (whose CO Cdr Ben Aldous described it "a fitting end to a highly-successful and productive exercise") and Quorn in the home of the German Navy for Kiel Week.

There's nothing in Britain which comes remotely close to the world's premier sailing festival.

Fairs. Tall ships. Parties. Parades. Eight days. Three million visitors (to put that into perspective, that's the combined attendance of Notting Hill Carnival, Bournemouth Air Show and Nottingham's Goose Fair).

Away from the waterfront, there are more than 30 sporting contests for participating ship's companies: cycling, golf, basketball, bowling, canoe polo, handball, hockey, rugby, roller-skating, chess, rugby and football.

With all those trophies up for grabs, hopefully in next month's edition we'll be able to celebrate a Kiel haul.

And on that bombshell...





Making it happen

THE Royal Navy stands on the cusp of an exciting future.

Maritime aviation has a big part to play – and it is now time to put all the moving parts together and make things happen.

Cdre Toby Williamson is FOST's man at the heart of the training effort that will supply the specialist skills needed to operate the high-tech machinery being planned, built and tested for the Senior Service.

"The Navy is on the edge of a very exciting period ahead for maritime aviation," said Cdre Williamson, Commander of Operational Training.

Complete renewal of the helicopter fleet is well under way, and carrier strike is prominent on the horizon – "as a preview to that it was wonderful to see, in the Mojave Desert in California, an F-35 flypast in the form of 17 Squadron to the background tune of *Heart of Oak*," he continued.

"In parallel to this, very significant progress is being made on HMS Queen Elizabeth a few hundred yards away from HMS Prince of Wales and in the docks at Rosyth, giving a sense of imminence to the renewal of a major capability of UK Defence."

"At the nexus of everything achieved thus far will be operational training – taking a multitude of strands and making them real."

Cdre Williamson, a maritime aviator and former CO at RNAS Culdrose, identified four particular points of interest.

"First is the training of the ship's

company of HMS Queen Elizabeth to provide the domestic support services to the weapon system – the aircraft," he said.

"The challenge for the ship's company is to adopt new equipment in the ship, which is the biggest the Royal Navy has ever had, and rapidly assimilate how to use it – to set the operating procedures (which, the chances are, will probably remain for 20 years) and make it all look like business as usual.

"We do not want any dramas; 'just get on with it guys – that's what we are paid to do.'

"On paper it looks impressive – we now need to prove that to be the case.

"Secondly, to be sure that the flight deck, full of noise and motion, is safe for pilots, ground crew and engineers.

"The flight deck is probably the place of greatest potential danger.

"The challenge is to make sure sailors, airmen, many of whom will be working at sea for the first time, are entirely comfortable with servicing, handling, launching and recovering aircraft that are both inherently dangerous if not operated correctly and expensive if broken.

"Thirdly, the battle staff commanding across the Joint and Combined sphere have to be ready to command the battle in hand.

"Battle staffs, led by UK Carrier Strike Group Commander Cdre Jerry Kyd, will be striving to constantly assimilate the battle at sea, in the air and over the land, refining plans, actioning operations in support of the Joint Force Commander,

and thereby demonstrating what it is the Navy does so well.

"Finally, we have to consider the air crew, both fixed and rotary, who will take their machines into the air and towards harm, acting as the eyes and ears of the Fleet, operating often at the edge of the envelope – and if necessary act, on orders, delivering a punch in a manner that probably won't be forgotten.

"They are placed at the point of greatest danger, and we have to be sure that they are competent and confident that they can see and shoot in the way that the aircraft has been designed.

"In my experience, success is derived from training which covers a multitude of disciplines – air crew, engineers, air traffic controllers, logisticians – sitting within a ship that is working in harmony, often at the extremes of the environmental envelope, routinely across organisational boundaries – specifically the RN and RAF.

"Sharing the same risks, challenges and demands, we forge these individuals into a team performance by creating a progressive training schedule designed to nurture the inexperienced, embrace the difficult and tackle the unknown.

"The key to success is that we have got two forces – RN and RAF – evolving together in a way that's testing both of them.

"So long as we have a shared understanding of what is needed, we have every chance of success.

"The ultimate benchmark is that of the enemy, and the successful ship's company and air group will be that

which recognises that the sum of the parts is most truly more important than the individuals."

Pulling all the strands of the training requirement together is a Herculean effort.

"As Commander Operational Training what do I do?" said the commodore.

"I ensure the right people are talking to each other.

"Maritime aviation is susceptible to human error and equipment malfunction to an extent that is unforgiving.

"This year we are now giving substance to the training design that will provide the work-up for Queen Elizabeth from 2018 until such time as it reaches full operational capability.

"From my perspective this enterprise is replete with innovation. Never before has a ship so big, manned by so few, been trained so quickly.

"Our reliance on cutting edge technology is manifest, our need to work across the Services and across nations has never been more obvious, but at the heart of everything will be the individual sailor, airman and marine doing their duty."

The means by which training is delivered has been evolving for decades, with simulators becoming more and more realistic.

"Within our training, synthetic technology has a large part to play.

"Simulation as a way of training has been with us in aviation for many years, but now aircrew, warfare and specialist engineering teams need

training solutions that can be embarked, federated with other training partners and, in due course, combined with international systems.

"Use of simulators, such as the F-35, is critical to pilot currency – it is cheaper than using an aircraft, and you can push the envelope."

"And, because the Navy offers forward deployment, you need the training solution collocated on board a carrier."

"There will be two F-35 simulators on board helping to keep the pilots topped up – half of their flying hours per month are expected to be simulated."

And the commodore is quite clear that the training path being followed by the Royal Navy has been made that much smoother by the level of international co-operation – particularly that extending across the Atlantic.

"Thus far, we have benefited from extensive advice from our American cousins in the US Navy, US Air Force and US Marine Corps, both in the training in specialist long-lead skills (including the exchange programme) and, more latterly, in designing the training plan that will take each of the individual units within the maritime task group and forge them into a carrier strike group ready for combat," said Cdre Williamson.

"In summary, there are lots of moving parts, and the profusion of work is the very essence of my in-tray, of which the policy is perfectly clear – it is now time to make it happen."

Cdr Staley-san, our man in Japan

IN THE carpeted wardroom of Admiral Togo aboard the Mikasa – to the Japanese what Nelson and HMS Victory are to Britons – Vice Admiral Eiichi Funada salutes the first Royal Navy liaison officer since the days of the Emperor Taisho.

Ninety-two years after the Anglo-Japanese Alliance passed into history, Cdr Simon Staley – a former Bagger observer and CO of HMS York – became the RN's new 'man in Japan'.

For nine months he's attached to both the *Kaijō Jieitai* (kie-jo, jay-tie, the Japanese Maritime Self-Defence Force) and the US Seventh Fleet as part of efforts by the First Sea Lord to broaden Britain's understanding of the Far East, its sea lanes, maritime trade and any possible emerging threats to the UK's interests in the Asia-Pacific region.

In the late 19th Century the Japanese Navy was modelled on the Royal Navy and, up to the Great War, RN gunners trained their Japanese counterparts while British yards were responsible for building Japan's capital ships such as the Mikasa, flagship at Tsushima when a Russian fleet was annihilated in 1905.

Such was the bond between the two nations and navies that they were allied for two decades before the Commonwealth chose closer ties with Washington rather than Tokyo.

When the alliance formally expired in the summer of 1923, so the mission of the RN liaison officer came to an end.

With the appointment of a new liaison officer, the aim is



to re-forge some of those ties, with an eye to the two navies working closer together when it comes to training, front-line operations – Japanese divers used RFA Cardigan Bay as their base during the world's largest mine-warfare exercise in the Gulf in 2013 and the RN and Japanese have worked side-by-side dealing with piracy off Africa – and future equipment.

"The significance of the moment is not lost – it reflects Japan's growing role and confidence on the world stage, and the joint aspiration we have

piracy, mine counter-measures and disaster relief," says Cdr Staley.

"The Japanese have an extremely impressive fleet – air and ballistic missile defence destroyers; state-of-the-art diesel-electric submarines; a burgeoning amphibious capability of three helicopter carriers capable of operating the MV-22 Osprey.

"At the end of the day, we are all mariners, we all understand the sea and we all want to ensure security of our maritime highways – they are our lifelines."

The new liaison role gives the incumbent unique access to the Maritime Self-Defence Force,

visiting the Fleet Air Force (the Japanese FAA), the Maritime Officer Candidate School (counterpart to Britannia Royal Naval College) and the most southern naval base for their 2nd Flotilla Squadron – just 60 miles from the Korean peninsula.

The British officer was also invited into Admiral Funada's six-monthly briefing for senior officers – the first non-Japanese Naval officer to do so – which ends with the Japanese commander reading out his instructions for the coming half year.

"Everyone stands to attention while he reads it out, all then deliver a long, low bow to him,

and then all exclaim: 'Banzai, Banzai, Banzai' – 1,000 years! It means the same as 'Long Live the Queen!'

Hand-in-hand with the assignment to the *Kaijō Jieitai* is working with the US Navy on current and future operations in the Asia-Pacific region, long-term plans up to three years ahead and co-ordinating with other allied navies with interests in this part of the world, chiefly Canada, Australia, New Zealand and France.

"It's an extraordinary privilege to have been given the responsibility to trailblaze this new position with the US Navy's largest forward-deployed fleet – and to set the benchmark and tone of expectations for those that follow me," he said.

The US Seventh Fleet comprises 80 warships, led by the super-carrier George Washington, 160 aircraft, nearly 40,000 sailors and marines.

Its domain is spread across 48 million square miles – larger than the North and South Atlantics combined – from the Kuril Islands to the northeast of Japan to the Antarctic, east to the International Date Line, west to the border between India and Pakistan.

That area spans 36 nations with coastlines, half the world's population and six of the world's largest armed forces (China, Russia, India, North Korea, Republic of Korea and Japan for the record).

As for the host nation, its fleet numbers more than 120 vessels including three helicopter carriers, 16 attack submarines, more than 40 destroyers and frigates and nearly 30 minehunters, aided by 400 aircraft and supported by more than 50,000 men and women.

In the event of any hostilities in the region, those ships – and those belonging to any other allied nation – would come under the control of the Seventh Fleet.

More typically, the Yokosuka-based force is conducting naval exercises (125 a year), responding to a natural disaster (such as Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines in late 2013 where its ships worked alongside Canada, Australia, New Zealand and France) or maritime security operations.

Otherwise, RN operations and patrols in this part of the world have become relatively infrequent since the handover of Hong Kong nearly 20 years ago – so the nine-month post offers a taste of a lifestyle most Britons don't get to sample.

"Professionally this is a unique and rewarding experience, but equally fulfilling has been the unrivalled exposure to Japan's rich culture, language and societal ways that have been passed down through thousands of years of history," says Cdr Staley.

"Whether it has been the Osaka street stalls selling ramen (broth and noodles) and yakatori (chicken intestines on a stick...); on the shinkansen (bullet train) whizzing at nearly 350mph between Tokyo and Kyoto; at the A-Bomb memorial sites in Nagasaki and Hiroshima; or even in the extraordinarily eclectic shopping malls in Tokyo, the overriding sense is of manners, orderliness, selflessness first."

"It is a beautiful country with four seasons which match the UK's and similar values to those we covet. I would commend this appointment to anyone."

Picture: MCM1 Joshua Karsten, USN



Zut alors, it's two corps

I LOVE Paris in the springtime,
I love Paris in the fall,
I love Paris when the Royal Marines are in town in their smartest uniforms celebrating a two-decade partnership with the French.

Which doesn't scan very well. Or rhyme. And Cole Porter is probably spinning in his grave.

Anyway...

In the French military's most hallowed ground, Les Invalides – a sort of mix of Horse Guards, Westminster Abbey, St Paul's, the Royal Hospital Chelsea and the Imperial War Museum all rolled into one – green berets and *les berets verts* celebrated the 20th anniversary of their affiliation.

Crowds of tourists as well as VIPs from Britain and France watched – and heard – an impressive display by the marines of both nations – 3 Commando Brigade and 9e Brigade d'Infanterie de Marine, the French amphibious army brigade – and their musicians.

The Royal Marines of 40 Commando from Norton Manor in Somerset provided the Guard and Colour Party, and a Royal Marines Corps of Drums integrated with the Breton pipes and band of 9e Brigade.

"Standing in the shadow of Napoleon it was truly a memorable event. Given the French attendance and its location and conduct, this 'brigadier level' event had national significance to our French partners," said Brig Charlie Stickland, commander of 3 Cdo Bde.

"They remain genuinely enthusiastic about the collaboration between our two brigades and are keen to strengthen ties through our planned exercises this autumn."

Beyond the ceremonial, the two brigades also signed a Combined Joint Expeditionary Force agreement – at the core of Anglo-French military relations and co-operation – and an agreement signed just a few metres from the sarcophagus of France's greatest military leader.

Presiding over the event was the Military Governor of Paris Lt Gen Hervé Charpentier, a former Chief of the General Staff and commander of 9e Brigade, while Maj Gen Julian Thompson, who commanded 3 Cdo Bde in the Falklands and signed the first partnership agreement between the two marine corps in 1995, also attended.

Picture: PO(Phot) Dave Gallagher, 30 Cdo IX Gp

Glaswegian break for Fighting Clan

THE first 'run ashore' for HMS Sutherland – the ship which (bravely) bills herself as the 'most Scottish in the Fleet' – following a massive refit was, fittingly, north of the border.

After a series of extensive acoustic trials off the west coast of Scotland – as one of the RN's premier submarine hunters, the Type 23 should be as quiet as possible while her sonar is finely-

tuned to locate enemy boats – Sutherland headed up the Clyde to Glasgow, the city where she was built 20 years ago.

The frigate spent four days at King George V wharf for a mixture of public engagement and some well-deserved downtime after a spring of trials and training.

Senior rates enjoyed a visit to Tennent's Brewery, while several

members of the wardroom took on the 'Escape from Glasgow' challenge – had to solve a series of problems to escape from a locked room within an hour.

The visit wasn't all play, however, as the Fighting Clan hosted numerous local officials, charity representatives Sea Cadet units, schools and colleges.

The rugby team had the chance to prove themselves

against Cartha Queens Park.

It was a closely-contested game with both sides putting in strong performances, but the civilian side triumphed 24-19 – despite spectacular scores from AB Pound, LS Wheeler and ET Saul.

Visit to Scotland's second city done, the Devonport-based frigate returned to sea to resume her trials.

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Birth control blunder

A LETTER in your March edition from B Riddle brought to mind a similar chuckle we had in the mess deck in HMS Rapid many years ago.

It involved a National Service OD, who, I have to say, wasn't the brightest apple on the tree.

He came back aboard after weekend leave looking very depressed. This caused me to ask him what was the matter? He replied saying he wasn't enjoying his recently married life, nor was his wife.

It appeared that both of them came from large and consequently poor families and that they didn't want to fall into the same trap.

Because of that they were using birth control, which in those days didn't have the options there are today.

I asked him had they tried Rendells pessaries, which as we all know are a suppository.

The dear lad said they had but that the Missus said they tasted too much like soap.

TJ Chuck Egan-Fowler
South Africa

Seamed good fun

WHEN I joined the RN in 1953 following my stint at HMS Raleigh, I was posted to HMS Boxer.

We young sprogs were immensely proud of our uniform and cared for it lovingly but we had a leading stoker who took smartness too far.

He had his No. 3 blues, then his shore-side blues and, like all of us, his tiddly suit.

I remember one memorable night in the mess. He got out the ironing board, as usual, and pressed his bell bottoms, as usual, into seven creases.

Us youngsters were most impressed until he put his foot into the trousers, caught his foot on the bottom and let out a string of swear words the like of which we hadn't heard, as his trousers fell apart into seven rings only held together by the inside seam.

We had a good laugh but he didn't find it so funny having to go ashore in his tiddly suit.

Dave Parker
Derbyshire

Jupiter reunion

HMS Jupiter (www.hmsjupiter.co.uk) will be having its annual reunion in Middlesbrough this year to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Jupiter's adoption.

During the 25 years that Jupiter was in commission the ship's companies enjoyed many a good run ashore.

We would like to make contact again with anyone who has memories of her visits and especially ex-ships' company and ex-TS Jupiter who were the local Sea Cadets affiliated to Jupiter.

The reunion weekend will take place at the Thistle Hotel in Middlesbrough on October 9 to 11.

Please contact ken.williams@xlnmail.com if you have a story to tell or would like to meet up.

Ken Williams
Secretary, HMS Jupiter Assn



LETTERS to the editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and full address, not necessarily for publication.

E-mail correspondents are also requested to provide this information. Letters cannot be submitted over the telephone.

Ice cold beer in Leyte

AFTER service in the Mediterranean and the invasion of Normandy, I was sent to Australia and became a member of the staff of Captain Escort Forces, British Pacific Fleet.

Sometimes we were based ashore and at other times joined sloops on journeys in the Pacific with the Captain.

We were continuously at sea in HMS Pheasant, when, with other escorts, our task had been to protect the supply ships while the aircraft carriers, etc. had been on a strike against the Japanese further north.

They then returned to rearm and refuel from the supply ships.

At the end of this period CEF and staff transferred to HMS

Empire Spearhead at anchor at Leyte Harbour.

Conditions were very unpleasant as it was extremely hot and humid and water was only available at certain times of the day.

The ship was also overrun with cockroaches.

On May 8 we heard on the radio that it was VE Day.

To celebrate we were given a bottle of beer from a fridge for seven nights. No beer has ever tasted so good since.

Every time I have seen the film *Ice Cold in Alex* I am reminded of Leyte and VE Day.

Alfred Stonehewer
Manchester



● Alfred Stonehewer served in the sloop HMS Pheasant

Join us for our Foulon tribute

SOME of your veteran readers will remember HMS Charybdis, a Dido-class anti-aircraft cruiser which took part in Operation Pedestal.

Along with the destroyer Limbourne, she was sunk by enemy E-boats off the French coast in October 1943 while hunting an important German convoy on Operation Tunnel.

Some time later, the bodies of 21 Royal Marines and sailors were washed up on Guernsey.

The German Commandant decided they should be buried with full military honours. For the citizens of the island this was a chance to show their defiance of the occupiers; 5,000 of them arrived at Foulon cemetery, bearing some 900 wreaths.

Over the following days a further 29 bodies came ashore, but the islanders were forbidden to attend the burials.

They remember the occasion every year with a special Foulon celebration.

A few of our branch intend going over this year, but sadly it will only be a few. We'd really like enough volunteers to make a guard of honour, which is what those gallant men deserve.

This year the dates are September 26-28, unfortunately for RMA members the weekend immediately after our reunion. But the attractions of Guernsey don't fall far short of those of Woodbury Common and it will be a great weekend for Jack and Royal alike.

If you're interested, please contact me on either 0161 442 0618 or ken.brotherhood@virginmedia.com

Ken Brotherhood
Manchester & Salford branch, RMA

Dark day rescuing Cromer survivors



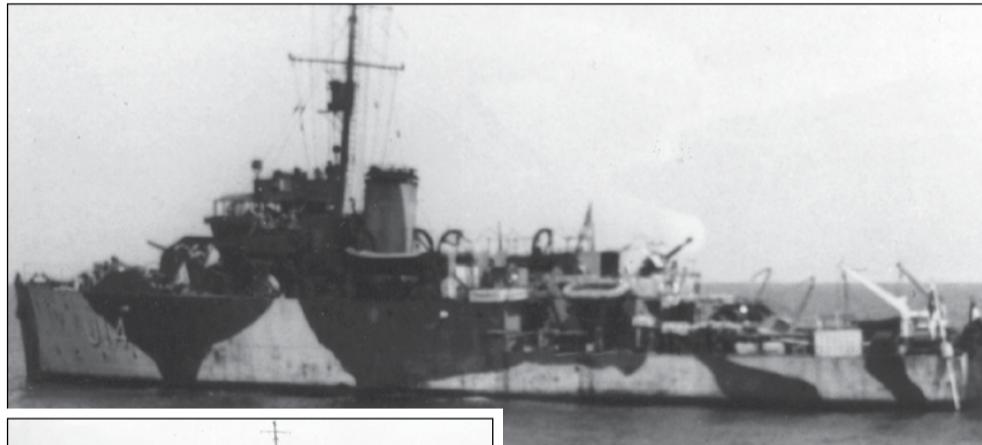
Each month Pusser's Rum are offering to courier a bottle of their finest tipple to the writer of our top letter. This month's winner is George Drewitt

ALL the stops are pulled out when *Navy News* arrives: It is the time to sit back and take in what is happening around the world.

Now my mind is turned back to 1941 when I was drafted to HMS Boston, a Bangor-class minesweeper.

I was a 21-year-old leading seaman in charge of about 20 young lads who had been in the Navy for only about three weeks.

Arriving aboard, it was not long before the First Lieutenant said: "Here are the confidential books on minesweeping, swot up on them because you are in charge of the minesweeping



● George Drewitt was serving in HMS Boston, above, when it went to rescue survivors from HMS Cromer, left, after she hit a mine

deck."

I had no knowledge of the work ahead, no knowledge of minesweeping whatsoever. And so it was with the remainder of the crew.

So from Liverpool, with a convoy for the Med, we set off via Cape Town of course.

By then we had learned the art of sweeping moored mines,

acoustic and other types of mines.

I really enjoyed the work, we were all trying to save lives and make sure the 8th Army got its tanks, guns, ammo, stores etc by sweeping a clear channel for the merchant ships to get to places like Tobruk and Benghazi in Africa.

By 1942 we were sweeping a

minefield near Mersa Matruh, North Africa, when our leader HMS Cromer struck a mine and sank in a matter of minutes.

I got the whaler away and we picked up the survivors.

I'm now in my 94th year and still fit as a fiddle.

George Drewitt
1st Destroyer Assn President
Middlesex

Cheers to our secret tots

THE actual process of issuing the daily tot of rum started with the meeting outside the Spirit Room of the parties involved - the Officer of the Day who would have drawn the Spirit Room key, the Stores rating responsible for producing the figures and for calling out the quantities, plus of course the two tankies who did the actual work.

Once inside, the issue of neat rum to the Senior Rates' messmen would firstly be made, then the required quantity of neat rum for the mixed issue would be pumped from the kilderkin into the barricoe, which was also known as "the breaker."

During the entire seven-month period in which I was responsible for the rum issue, our well-oiled routine was not once rumbled.

The Officer of the Day never twigged that when

the tankie had tired of playing with the grog, he carefully scooped as much as he could into the quart measure and placed the pint one inside it. They were then carefully removed, and, having watched the OOD disappear, we three had the best part of a pint or more to enjoy before we, too returned to our messes in a roseate glow.

Bearing in mind that I was a mere National Serviceman when called up in February 1953, it follows that I was "under-age" at this interesting time, and not entitled to a tot.

I can therefore honestly claim that I drank more grog when I wasn't entitled to it than I did when I was.

Doug Andrews
Hertfordshire

If you submit a photograph which you did not take yourself, please make sure that you have the permission for us to publish it.

Given the volume of letters, we cannot publish all of your correspondence in *Navy News*, nor can we reply to every one.

We do, however, publish many on our website, www.navynews.co.uk, accompanied by images.

We look particularly for correspondence which stimulates debate, makes us laugh or raises important issues. The editor reserves the right to edit your submissions.

NAVY NEWS

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Tough tests ensure personnel remain safe at sea

Survival of the fittest



● Craig Mowat in his Once Only Survival Suit

Pictures: Samantha Chapman

It's amazing what goes through your mind in a split second – that's what I thought before crashing into the cold water, *writes Craig Mowat.*

It was the first day of my Embarked Forces Sea Safety Course (EFSSC) and despite the persistent showers and driving wind I couldn't stop smiling.

Every member of personnel embarking in a Royal Navy ship – excluding ship's company – is expected to undergo the two-day training every four years.

The course teaches basic fire fighting, how to escape from a smoke-filled ship, and how to survive at sea.

As one of the Royal Navy's two civilian operational press officers it's important that I also understand these procedures because at sea it could be me who finds a fire onboard or has to lead journalists to safety.

And sitting in lectures on day one the relevance of the course was made even clearer when the chief instructor, Ray, said that 30,000 lives lost in WW2 were due either to exposure or abandonment at sea.

As a result a paper was produced in 1946 setting out what improvements were to be implemented to prevent such a large loss of life ever occurring again.

As Ray said: "We (the Royal Navy) no longer wait for something to happen but are in a constant state of development and progress."



● Craig Mowat in the water before making his way to the life raft

Fast forward 70 years and embarked Armed Forces personnel now need to undergo basic sea safety training through the Phoenix School of Maritime Survivability at HMS Excellent in Portsmouth.

There were about 30 people on my course and surprisingly the majority were soldiers – all preparing for upcoming exercises or operations that will see them working alongside their Naval colleagues.

On that first day we each had to learn to don a Once Only Survival Suit (OOSS) in two-and-a-half minutes, jump from height into a lake, swim to an upturned life raft, turn it over, gather fellow survivors and then secure the life raft against the elements while preparing for rescue.

After a morning of theory at the Sea Survival Training Centre in Ardent Building, Horsea Island, I was keen to put what I had learned into practice.

As quickly as I could I pulled on my OOSS in the hangar then queued



● Craig Mowat in the water before making his way to the life raft

up waiting to take the plunge while watching those ahead of me.

The next few minutes flashed past – as much fun as I was having bobbing around in an over air-filled suit I also remembered that it was a test to see whether I could survive or not.

Fortunately I love the water, even if the temperature is a little above freezing, so rectifying the life raft; climbing in and out the other side was all great fun.

Second time round I had to swim out and rescue an injured shipmate before hauling him across to the life raft and getting him safely inside.

Once inside the reality hit home – there were fewer than 20 of us in the raft, it was wet, the air was thick, the rain was lashing down, and as the last one in there was nowhere left to sit.

With the doors sealed it all became rather depressing and I hope I never have to apply this training in real life.

For me, day two was far more serious.

I can handle a nice cold swim in

open water but coming face to face with a raging fire in a confined space was new territory.

This time the training was based in Phoenix Building on Whale Island and began with a series of lectures.

We swapped our bright orange survival suits for yellow flame-retardant coveralls and old fashioned fire-fighter helmets before entering the cavernous Firefighting Training Unit (FTTU).

Alongside a lecture hall for fire training are several stand-alone units, each designed to resemble a warship's superstructure.

First we learned how to tackle a small fire onboard using extinguishers then moved on to using the ship's fire hoses.

I will never look at a fire extinguisher the same again; whereas I thought they could only be used once I have now learned more about their life expectancy, what they contain, as well as how to refill one – definitely worth knowing.

The next big test was getting out of a ship as a team whilst wearing emergency breathing apparatus.

I can only describe this as putting a plastic bag over my head while breathing in recycled air.

Then it was on to the big test, the one that would sort the men from the boys, tackling a real fire in the galley.

I'm a press officer, I deal with the media, and document the Navy's operational activities; I don't fight fires.

But crouching there in the dark, smoke-filled galley with a raging fire in front of me, I realised that these skills not only apply mid-Atlantic but in everyday life too.

The course is essential training for military personnel and not many civilians get to take part, but it's bread-and-butter training that keeps everyone at the top of their game.



● The six-metre long model is returned to BRNC via a window at the college

Model back after refit



● Cdr Rob Dunn re-launches the model watched by the Babcock and IMS teams

Pictures: Craig Keatingh

"It's great now to have it back at BRNC looking so pristine, with markers now painted on the exterior to show the different compartments on board.

"The Type 23s are the workhorses of the Royal Navy and it's likely that many of the cadets will go on to serve on this class of warship in the future."

A contract to refurbish the model was awarded to Babcock with the work sub-contracted to

Industrial Maintenance Services (IMS) at HMS Excellent in Portsmouth.

Babcock project manager Sean Mather said: "While the Type 23 model was away a replacement Type 42 destroyer model was provided from HMS Excellent so that training could continue.

"We were delighted to return the model to BRNC well within the timescale and at no additional cost."



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Korea break for BRNC

A DELEGATION from Britannia Royal Naval College visited South Korea for an insight into training as part of an ongoing exchange programme between the two navies.

Two Officer Cadets and two members of staff became the first representatives from Dartmouth to spend time at the Republic of Korea's counterpart, its naval academy in Jinhae-gu, a district of Changwon, in the south-east of the country.

During their eight-day visit the RN team were shown how the South Korean Navy prepares its Officer Cadets for duties at sea.

The group took part in some training, including martial arts sessions, sailing in the South China Sea and language lessons. They also had the opportunity to visit a number of South Korean warships and a submarine, as well as seeing some of the country's cultural and historic sites.

"The South Koreans visit us at BRNC on an annual basis," explained Lt Alex Lassoued, BRNC's International Liaison Officer.

"To make this a true exchange programme it was important that we visited them to learn about their training methods.

"Their training is similar to the American system, in that they spend four years in training, during which they also study for a degree.

"The curriculum includes a year of martial arts training. This is one of the key parts of their militarisation process and teaches the cadets discipline while also providing them with a focus as future members of the Armed Forces.

"What stuck out the most to all of us is the staggering individual work ethic."

Lt Lassoued continued: "The visit showed the cadets how defence diplomacy plays a big part in the Royal Navy's engagement with other nations. As naval officers that should be at the top of their priorities wherever they go.

"The South Koreans were very generous hosts. We were introduced to the admiral in charge of the academy who stressed how important he sees this engagement programme and invited us to visit again."

The BRNC delegation also spent time at the British Embassy in Seoul where they were updated on the wider region and the role of the UK diplomatic service.

Perfectly normal...

SAILORS from RNAS Culdrose joined locals in celebrating an historic Cornish tradition – the biennial 'beating the bounds'.

Helston folk, led by the mayor, civic officers and local school children, walk a circular route around the boundary stones which mark out the long-standing boundaries of a town or borough.

Several of those fading granite markers – marked HB for Helston boundary – lie within the 1,000 or so acres covered by Culdrose.

So far, so normal. The act of beating, however, involves placing some cut turf on top of the marker which is then 'headed' by an inhabitant of the borough who's lifted up by fellow locals.

Although it's intended to mark out the extent of a borough's domain, another theory behind the ancient tradition is it warns potentially naughty youngsters to behave, otherwise they'll be left on the boundary.

Makes Royal Marines and their penchant for tutus look perfectly normal...



(Just about) 50 shades of grey

WE COUNTED about three dozen. Plus a few shades of primer and undercoat.

Blown up at 200-times magnification, on the left are the layers of paint caked on the hull of the Royal Navy's sole survivor from the greatest clash of dreadnaughts.

Experts working on the restoration of cruiser HMS Caroline have sliced through her history to reveal the exact paint scheme she 'wore' when she sailed for the Battle of Jutland at the end of May 1916.

Caroline spent 85 years of her Royal Navy career as the headquarters for Naval reservists in Belfast.

Before that, however, she was one of the greyhounds of the Fleet, scouting ahead of the capital ships on the hunt for the enemy.

She was one of more than 150 British warships which locked horns with the Kaiser's High Seas Fleet in the North Sea at Jutland, when she charged at the German lines on at least one occasion to unleash torpedoes.

Now no longer needed as a base for Royal Navy Reservists – they now meet at Lisburn – the ship is being returned to her Jutland glory in a £14m revamp which will be completed in time for the battle's centenary.

With no colour photography available from the earlier years of the ship's life, it looked impossible to determine the warship's true livery a century ago.

That was until expert Jef Maytom discovered paint samples close to Caroline's bridge.

"This finding rewrites the rule book for historians specialising in naval and maritime history," he says. "It is the equivalent of a palaeontologist being able to finally prove that dinosaurs were a specific colour or had feathers."

The research shows the cruiser has enjoyed many paint schemes through her life, anywhere from a beige-cream to a rather dark grey at her launch in 1914.

Their discoveries should lead to a better understanding of the liveries used by navies during World War 1 – and, crucially, they've also found that there are no toxins in the various layers of paint caking Caroline which could threaten wildlife in her home in Alexandra Dock or Belfast Harbour.

"HMS Caroline is easily the most historically significant ship in the UK and Ireland after HMS Victory," he says.

"The ship is full of curiosities and we are making discoveries of never before seen artefacts including important paint samples."

"Thanks to what we have found on HMS Caroline, we are able to review the entire colour history of the ship and accurately depict the paint schemes Caroline was painted in over 100 years."



Torquay with all the trimmings

MORE than 100 submariners enjoyed the fresh air – and gratitude of the British public – when they marched through the heart of Torquay.

There was a big turn-out from locals to watch the relatively-rare spectacle of the crew of HMS Torbay parading through her namesake borough as they celebrated the historic honour of freedom.

Cdr Dan Knight, commanding officer of the Devonport-based T-boat, received a scroll marking the honorary Freedom of the Borough of Torbay from Mayor Cllr Gordon Oliver at a traditional ceremony outside the town hall, before the deeps pounded the streets of the English Riviera behind the Band of HM Royal Marines.

"Having been in the Royal Navy for 16 years it was a special occasion for me to be able to parade through my home town," said CPO Jim Tozer who serves in Torbay and lives in Torquay.

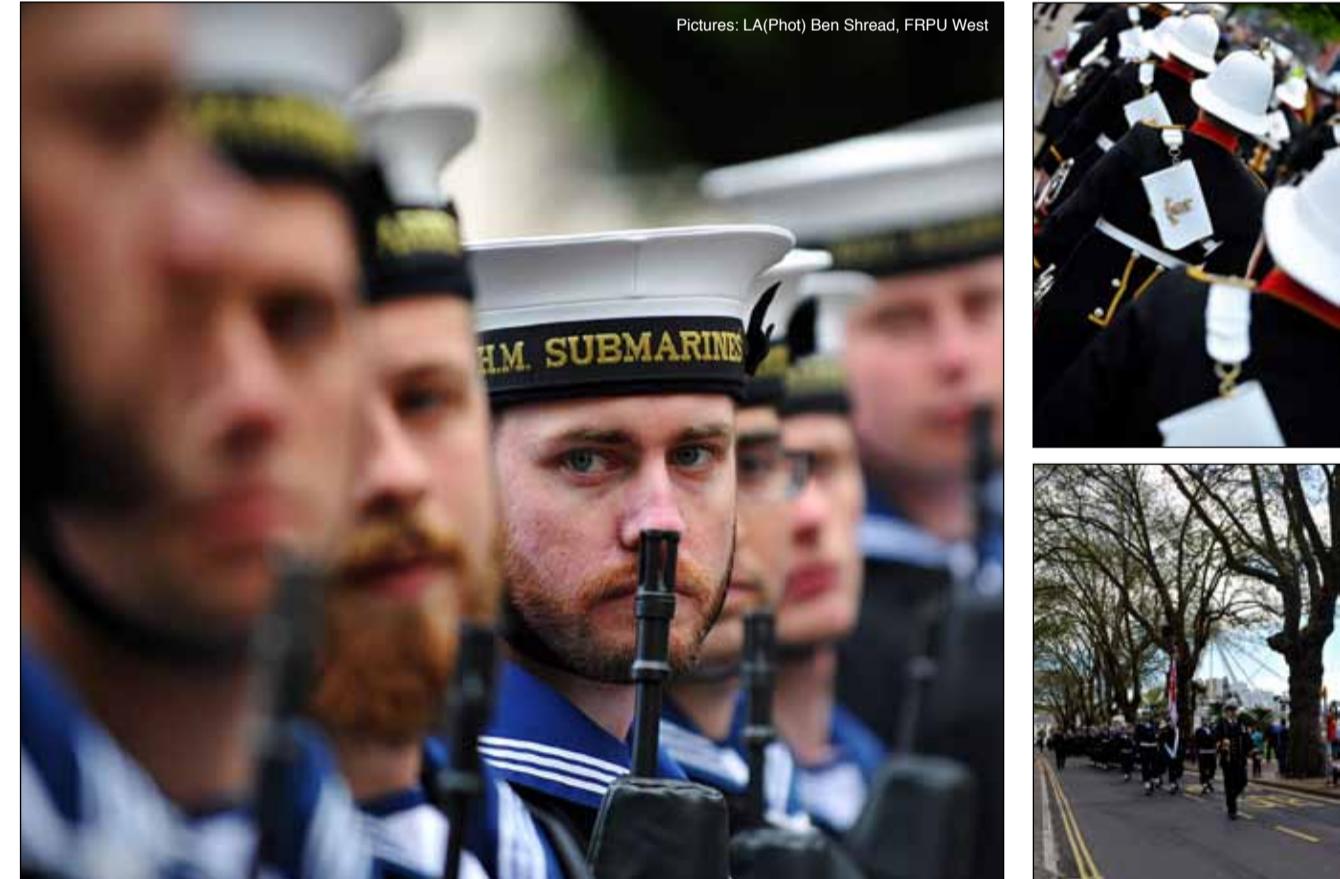
"Events like this are becoming rarer and it will stand out in the memories of everyone involved as an exceptional event."

Shipmate and fellow Torquay native CPO Neil Abraham added: "I am proud to have represented the Royal Navy in my home town and what was extra special was that my family could come and watch the parade through the streets."

Cdr Knight said all who served in his boat appreciated the moral backing they received from the borough throughout the submarine's nearly-30-year career.

"We are immensely grateful for this support. This is a fitting event to acknowledge this support. It is the nature of the Submarine Service that we spend a lot of our time in isolation, carrying out rewarding work we can't readily discuss," he said.

"This support back home makes the isolation from friends



and family more tolerable.

"My ship's company and I – and our predecessors over the past 28 years – are immensely grateful to the Torbay community for the support shown not only to this submarine, but also to the Royal Navy as a whole, throughout this great borough's history."

Cllr Oliver thanked the hunter-killer's crew for ensuring the people of the borough could sleep soundly at night knowing they were working 24 hours a day to ensure their safety.

"This is a celebration of the work of officers and men of HMS

Torbay and of the Royal Navy. This special day is a rare chance for them to get the recognition they deserve. Because of the nature of their work it does not happen very often.

"The Borough of Torbay is delighted Commander Knight and his crew have also found the time to tour Torbay schools."

The Trafalgar-class boat has been patrolling since 1987 and was officially recognised by her 'twin town' two years later. She's also bound with local Sea Cadets and Torbay Yacht Club, her crew raise money for good causes on the Riviera and represent the Senior Service at November ceremonies.



Blind veterans gather

BLIND military veterans from the US and South Africa have completed an exchange visit to Britain where they joined Blind Veterans UK.

Members of the American organisation the Blinded Veterans Association (BVA) visited the UK on a programme named Project Gemini.

The BVA's week-long schedule of activities and events included activities such as blind cricket and wakeboarding as well as a visit to Buckingham Palace for a special garden party celebrating the centenary of Blind Veterans UK.

The charity was originally formed in 1915 as St Dunstan's to help Servicemen who had lost or damaged their eyesight as a result of injuries sustained in World War 1.

Among the American veterans in attendance was Sgt Adam Roland, who lost his sight when he was injured by an improvised explosive device in Iraq in 2011.

He has since gone on to become an award winning horse rider in rodeo competitions in Arizona.

Adam said: "It was an awesome week. I'll never forget the camaraderie, the laughter and the privilege of being amongst fellow blind veterans."

Project Gemini enables Blind Veterans UK and the BVA to share experiences and knowledge about matters such as blind rehabilitation and readjustment training, vision research and adaptive technology for the blind.

This year, two blind veterans from South Africa's St Dunstan's Association also joined the project.

Double cheque

WORKERS from Clyde Naval Base's Communication Centre presented cheques to two charities close to their hearts after fundraising efforts throughout the year.

Gareloch Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA)

and Quarriers' Countryview Children's Respite Centre are each £750 better off after the Communication Centre's efforts raised £1,500.

The money was raised by holding raffles and by selling a wide selection of home-made cakes and goodies to workmates.

One member of the team who is particularly delighted with the money raised is Gill White, whose eight-year-old son Strachan regularly uses facilities provided by the charities.

"I would like to thank all the Communication Centre staff for taking these very personal causes

to their hearts and supporting them with such enthusiasm," said Gill.

"My little boy Strachan suffers from the genetic abnormality IDIC15 and has epilepsy and developmental delay."

"He stays at Countryview for respite care several times a year and rides weekly with the Gareloch RDA at Colgrain Equestrian Centre."

"These two amazing organisations help and give so much."

"I cannot praise their facilities, organisation, caring staff and volunteers highly enough."

Gareloch Riding for the Disabled is based at Colgrain Equestrian Centre, where riders of all ages and disabilities are welcomed and supported by around 70 volunteers.

Quarriers' Countryview Children's Respite Centre offers regular short-break care to families caring for a child aged between five and 18 years with learning disabilities.

Tea time

A PREFERENCE for builders' tea and the decline of the teapot are just two of the findings of a poll by SSAFA in the build-up to their Big Brew Up.

The fundraising campaign for Britain's oldest national military charity – tea parties around the country and beyond – came to a head as *Navy News* went to press.

And as the nation wets its whistle, it can reflect on the fact that over-milky tea is the biggest tea turn-off, while only one in ten of those polled now use a teapot when brewing up.

www.ssafa.org.uk/big-brew-up

Help for homeless veterans

MILITARY homes charity Alabaré has secured funds to support Armed Forces veterans who are homeless or in need of support.

A grant of £35,000 has been awarded by the RNRMC.

In 2009 Alabaré opened its first dedicated home for veterans in Plymouth.

Since then more than 100 bedspaces have been developed in 22 dedicated homes located across south and south-west England in Plymouth, Gosport, Fareham, Weymouth, Salisbury, Bristol and Gloucester, and in North and South Wales.

Prior to moving in residents have been either homeless or at severe risk of becoming homeless.

During the past five years Alabaré have supported 300 veterans, of whom 17 were Royal Navy and Royal Marines veterans.

The new funding will enable the charity to sustain their dedicated homes through which they hope to support 140 veterans including former Naval personnel in the next 12 months.

Alabaré homes provide a safe environment which veterans can rebuild confidence and focus on their future.

With help from Alabaré's trained support staff the residents can address any underlying issues such as debt, addiction, mental health and relationship breakdown.

When required, staff help residents access further specialist support.



● Rally teams gather at Berchtesgaden in Bavaria at the end of the 2014 European tour

European drive for funds

THE latest round of the Help for Heroes 4x4 European Rally has pushed the total raised by the series since 2010 beyond £1m – and that is before the teams arrive at their destination.

As *Navy News* went to press the entrants were well into the 12-day event, which takes the form of a battlefield tour, following the path of the Allies as they liberated mainland Europe

after the Normandy landings, ending in Bavaria.

Teams manning 45 road-legal 4x4 cars enjoy a military history tour, fun activities, some off-road driving and a club-type social.

Organised by Keith Bowen and his son, Tim Price-Bowen, the rally also includes elements of the World War 1 campaigns of the Western Front on the Somme and at Ypres.

The first rally took place in 2010 with the aim of taking 20 vehicles across Europe and raising £20,000 for the charity, but more than twice as many cars eventually set off and they raised more than £120,000.

It became an annual event, with crews comprising serving British and US military, ex-Service personnel, civilians and families with children.



Sainsbury's

lead partner of the Centenary Woods project

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£20
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will enable us
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a tree



Growing dedication by Trust

A CONSERVATION charity is creating a 'living thank you' to all those who served their country during World War 1 – including more than 43,000 Naval personnel who lost their lives.

The Woodland Trust is planting one million trees as a lasting tribute to everyone who played a part and those who supported them.

Now the Trust is calling on *Navy News* readers to say their own personal thank you by dedicating a tree in one of four flagship Centenary Woods being created in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Whether it's in honour of a family member who served, or as a tribute to a particular regiment or ship, a suggested donation of £20 will dedicate a single tree in one of the woods.

Pip Borrill, Woodland Trust's First World War Project Manager, said: "These symbolic trees and woods will transform the landscape into rich, vibrant and flourishing woodland and will stand proud as a lasting legacy for those who fought, those who lost their lives, and also for their loved ones on the home front who supported them from afar.

"At a time when our woodland cover is so low compared to other countries, planting trees now is more important than ever.

"As well as representing enormous strength and bravery shown by the nation during the First World War, the trees that are planted during the course of the project will help strengthen our natural landscape."

Sainsbury's is the lead partner of the First World War Centenary Woods Project.

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/military

Tribute to Jonathon

A FUNDRAISING and awareness campaign to tackle mouth cancer is to be continued by a group in tribute to their inspirational leader.

Team Jonathon was named after former Royal Marine Jonathon Scott, who died just two days before he was due to tackle a fun run in London.

His family, friends and colleagues went ahead with the Superhero challenge in Regent's Park, raising £1,350, and they vowed to continue their campaign in his memory.

Jonathon's story featured in May's *Navy News* – and if you would like to help the team, see their page at www.facebook.com/teamjonathonuk?pnref=lhc

Worst part of run? A gun-toting panda...

ROYAL Marine Marco Altibrandi was on his feet for nearly two days as he ran 160 miles in one of the UK's toughest races to help fellow green berets.

The 24-year-old, originally from Rome but today living in Skipton, North Yorkshire, was one of just 29 people who attempted the punishing Hardmoors 160-mile race around north-east England – and one of only 16 to finish.

Marco, who serves with Royal Marines Reserve Merseyside, crossed the finish line in Filey after 43h 58m 5s of running – six hours ahead of the deadline set by race organisers.

Fellow Royals from the Merseyside unit ran alongside him for stretches to keep the pace and provide moral support, and they also had food and water waiting for him at checkpoints.

Marco, whose day job is as a part-time security guard, says the worst moment was "hallucinating and seeing countless faces in bushes – specifically a panda with a gun. My fellow runner wouldn't believe it was there!"

He's been a reservist since 2009, earning his coveted green beret the following year after 16 months of training.

Since then, he's been to Norway and California on exercises with the Corps – taking



● Marco Altibrandi approaches the finish line of the gruelling Hardmoors 160-mile race

advantage of time when not on the ranges in the Mojave Desert to go running.

"The overall driving factor to keep going was the Commando mindset to never give up. There were times when it got tough but the support from guys running with me and all the sponsorship gave me a massive morale boost," he said.

"My toes were falling apart and my feet were hanging out but otherwise I was in pretty good shape – ultimately I prepared pretty well and my training for disciplined eating to fuel the

body saw me through."

Beyond the personal goal of simply completing the race – equivalent to the distance between Liverpool and Cambridge – Marco has already doubled the £500 target he set to raise for the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund.

"I ran the early morning stages on the second day with Marco and he was hanging out but determined to finish," said fellow reservist Cpl Tom Davies, by day a suspension engineer with Formula 1 team Red Bull.

"He's trained for months

for this which has made him a better Royal Marine both in the field and on exercise and he has presented the Corps as well the detachment in a brilliant light."

And despite the battering his body took on the monster run, he's already eying up a 100-miler around Mont Blanc and what is billed as Britain's most brutal race, the Spine – running the entire length of the Pennine Way (268 miles) without stopping.

Marco is still taking donations for his chosen charity at www.justgiving.com/marco-altibrandi

Piece of cake

A LIBERAL tot of rum in a fruit cake may have helped swing the Naval judge's vote in the favour of veteran baker David Eggin, 90.

The CO of Devonport Naval Base, Cdre Ian Shipperley, was the guest judge at the charity cake bake in aid of the Alzheimer's Society.

Support walkers

ROYAL Marines from 45 Cdo joined one of their own for part of his fund-raising challenge.

For three days, seven green berets from Whiskey Coy marched with former Royal Thomas 'Taff' Davies on his walk from John o' Groats to Land's End.

As the 64-year-old drew near RM Condor at Arbroath he received some support.

In Glen Doll, at the southern end of the Cairngorms, the commandos also handed over a cheque from fundraising on



Cashing in on badges

FORMER Royal Navy Chef Basil 'Rolly' Rollinson (above) has collected £2,800 for Help for Heroes by collecting badges and using them to cover a white tropical uniform.

The project started at a reunion of the HMS Solebay Association, in which he served as a Ck (S), in Peebles in 2012.

Since then he has collected badges from all over the UK and as far afield as Russia and the USA – and the suit has got heavier and heavier.

Rolly has collected at various locations and events, including outside the Sole Bay Inn in Southwold (which the association describes as its spiritual home).

He also walked from Gosport to Portsmouth Harbour via Fareham, collecting all the way.

At the association's 18th annual reunion in Rochester he ended his mission and handed over the cash.

On the road

SAILORS from Flag Officer Sea Training have been preparing for a tough bike ride which was due to end as *Navy News* went to press.

The ten-strong team hoped to tackle the 940 miles from Land's End to John o' Groats in ten days to raise money for the RNRMC.

The cyclists aimed to rest at fire stations and TA centres en route in true military style, using camp beds and sleeping bags.

<http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/team/fostlejog2015>

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Triumph for hope and an experience

TWO Royal Navy members of Northwood HQ led a charity walk in aid of New Hope, a homeless charity based in nearby Watford.

POPT 'Robbo' Robinson and WO 'Barry' Johnson took a team of seven staff from the charity, including service users, north for the Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge, which consisted of a 25-mile walk across Pen-y-Ghent, Whernside and Ingleborough, all within the 12-hour time limit.

"This was a great opportunity to give back to the local community and assist a charity by raising awareness of what they do whilst having fun in a challenging environment," said POPT Robinson.

New Hope exists to serve individuals who are homeless or vulnerable through the provision of accommodation



and opportunities to transform lives.

They house up to 60 people every night and support more than 600 people every year.

The team (above) consisted of various ages, backgrounds and fitness levels, however all managed to achieve the standard of finishing within 12 hours.

Giving a little bit more

IF YOU are sat in uniform right now, then there's a near 50/50 chance that you are giving to your charity by way of Payroll Giving (PRG) – thank you!

This stat isn't to be sniffed at. Across the Naval Service, in all its various guises, 47 per cent of you are contributing at least £6 (actually £4.80 for 20 per cent rate tax payers) toward funding our work; work that could ultimately benefit you and your families now or in future.

However, we're not market leaders. The Army and RAF support their charities with PRG sign-ups in excess of 60 per cent. So I'm challenging you to show your commitment today.

HMS Dragon is leading by example, with two thirds of the ship's company enrolled in the scheme via their monthly JPA statements.

Fellow Type 45 HMS Dauntless follows closely behind on 58 per cent, while HMS Lancaster is third with 55 per cent.

North of the border HMS Neptune are making strides towards becoming the first Naval base with half of its personnel signed up – they're at 43 per cent, with the largest contributions coming from submarine HMS Vigilant (53 per cent).

The Royal Marines of RMB Chivenor are mucking in nicely, with four out of ten making a regular donation, while the Fleet Air Arm sit at the tail-end, with RN contingents at RAF Benson contributing most significantly with a 36 per cent sign-up rate.

If you're interested in learning more about Payroll Giving, such as signing up or booking a presentation to help increase your unit's sign-up rate, contact me or see rnrmc.org.uk/payrollgiving

Let's increase our Service-wide commitment of supporting your charity to 60 per cent. We can't have the Army or RAF beating us, can we?

Dean Rogers

Payroll Giving Business Development Executive
The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity

FUNDRAISER OF THE MONTH

Lt Cdr David Langley RN (Retd)



A former RNR Medical Branch officer of 18 years, Lt Cdr David Langley, inspired us all by taking on our Road to Twickenham physical challenge – by walking to his local postbox.

While that might not seem extraordinary, in 2012 David suffered a stroke causing him paralysis in one side of his body. His achievement, which took one hour, represents the furthest he has walked since being diagnosed with hemiparesis.

We send our deepest thanks to David, a self-professed Royal Navy rugby supporter.

THE Portsmouth Triathlon

returns for a third year on Sunday September 6 and will once again be held in support of the Royal

Navy and Royal Marines Charity. The partnership event between Portsmouth City Council and Triathlon England will snake through the south of the historic Naval city, a flat and fun course that features an Olympic distance swim in the Solent (1,500 metres) that is held just to the west of South Parade Pier.

A 40km seafront cycle – on fully closed roads – will pass Henry VIII's Southsea Castle, the D-Day Museum and the iconic Spinnaker Tower before entering the Historic Dockyard.

After pedalling past ironclad HMS Warrior, HMS Victory and the Mary Rose Museum, cyclists will complete laps of Southsea Common and Canoe Lake before entering the final phase.

From the transition point at Castle Field, competitors will begin a 10km run westwards along the esplanade towards Old Portsmouth, taking in the Garrison Church and the Square and Round Towers at the mouth of the harbour before reaching the finish line which is back on Castle Field.

Supporters of the charity wishing to raise sponsorship in aid of us should get in touch at fundraising@rnrmc.org.uk

Speaking of the summer staple, past winner Rachel Clay said: "It was fabulous.

"It's always great to do a local race and take in all the sights.

"The support was amazing out there.

"It's a great race – I just really hope we can do it again and again."

As well as the standard Olympic distances there are different distances for a sprint version of the event, which will feature a 750-metre swim, a cycle ride of 20km and finish with a 5km run.

The standard event starts at 6.30am, just after sunrise, with the sprint competitors entering the fray at 9am.

Last year, in a total field of more than 300 competitors, Colin Dixon won the standard event in a time of 2h 6m 37.5s.

Visit portsmouthtriathlon.com for maps, race packs, advice for runners and entry details.

Anchors aweigh for Culdrose pirate ship

A POPULAR play area at RN Air Station Culdrose has been passed 'fit for use' by the kids from the Air Station's children's day nursery, Helitots.

The play area, in the shape of a pirate ship, has slides, ropes and nets, which for the youngsters at Culdrose open up a whole world of adventures for exploring and creating imaginative scenarios.

"Having the pirate ship refitted and refurbished has made a big difference to us," said Steph Richards, Manager of Helitots.

"It gives us an extra play area for the children. It's a very popular place with everyone – they all want to explore."

"Having a pirate ship on the Naval base is great fun – the children like to think it's what their mummies and daddies do."

Over the years, the wooden structure has stood the ravages of hundreds of tiny hands and feet across its decks and rigging.

Situated conveniently at the rear of the Wardroom, the play area proves itself extremely popular to all base ranks with dependants.

However, the ship has recently started to show its age, and a bit of tender loving care was required.

To the rescue came the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, who happily gave a grant of £4,306.68 for its restoration.



● Anne Carr, Head of Grants at the RNRMC, and Lt Cdr Rich Cartew with children from the Culdrose Helitots nursery

Picture: PO(Phot) Paul A'Barrow

and marines and their families.

"Sometimes it's just simple things, like funding repairs and improvements for recreational assets, such as this pirate ship, used by so many children, which help ease the stress and pressure that can accompany life in the Service."



Portsmouth triathlon returns

"We truly hope all these 'young pirates and princesses' will enjoy having their ship back."

Stanley, a member of RNAS Culdrose's Helitots, has a different take on it: "I'm really glad the pirate ship's been mended, we can keep the crocodiles away now!"

Other projects the charity has funded at RNAS Culdrose, near Helston in Cornwall, include £35,000 worth of improvements to the station Briefing Facility/Cinema and additionally assisting in the cost of training ASA Level 2 teachers for the establishment's young swimmers club.

Ambush is Rockin'

SAILORS from HMS Ambush tackled the gruelling 'Run the Rock' race for the RNRMC when their boat called in at Gibraltar.

During the Astute-class submarine's inaugural visit to the Rock, 36 members of her crew ran the 2.7-mile course which rises 1,300ft, netting £800 for the RNRMC.

The 36 were the 'lucky' ones – there were too many volunteers for all to run, so the remainder have committed themselves to trying next time they visit.

For the record, the first man to the top was Lt Patrick Vickers, with a time of just over 23 minutes.

Charity box

A TOTAL of £20,000 has been generously donated by the London Stock Exchange following an annual charity boxing match and dinner, sponsored by St James's Place Wealth Management, Boreham Wood. Thank you!

Ship fund

EVERYTHING will soon be shipshape at Burraton Community Primary School, near HMS Drake, Plymouth, following a £1,500 contribution towards redeveloping the kids' playground (in the shape of a ship, of course).

Massed band

THE Massed Bands of Her Majesty's Royal Marines will perform a two-night South Coast Proms at the upcoming America's Cup World Series Portsmouth event on Thursday and Friday July 23 and 24. Buy tickets at ticketmaster.co.uk/ACWSPortsmouth

Dinghy day

PLAIN sailing? The Royal Navy Sailing Club will be conducting a 24-hour sail in aid of the charity in Bosun dinghies inside Portsmouth Harbour this month.

Up to 18 crew split across several vessels will carry out two hour-on and six hour-off shifts.



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Cuddles for hero dads



A CUDDLY daddy scheme to help children cope with the absence of their Serviceman fathers has proved a runaway success.

Jo Lomax wanted to help her children Charlotte, three, and Henry, one, cope when their Royal Marines father was away and came up with the Huggable Heroes idea.

"They are too young to understand that going away is just part of their daddy's job," she said. "I came up with Huggable Heroes, which consists of a front and back photograph, which I print on to fabric to make a cuddly daddy."

"The children love their daddy cuddles, he goes everywhere with us so he doesn't miss a thing."

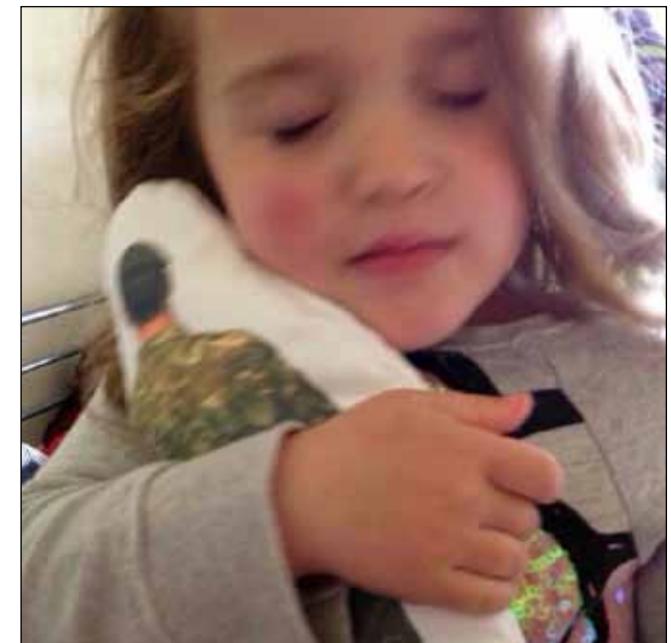
Jo, along with mum Julia, now has a Huggable Heroes Facebook page and Twitter account.

"Huggable Heroes help to reinforce bonds and reduce separation," added Jo, who has also been approached by a filmwriter who is including a Huggable Hero in a film called *A Father's Promise*.

"Huggable Heroes help to reinforce bonds and reduce separation anxiety in our brave children."

Huggable Heroes raises funds for Forces Support Charity, My Daddy is a Soldier Adventures and Scotty's Little Soldiers.

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Aisha says yes to top great day

A 24-YEAR-OLD Royal Navy recruit from Southport has celebrated the end of his basic training by proposing to his long-time girlfriend.

Trainee Seaman Specialist Jamie Stretch joined the Royal Navy in February and spent ten weeks training at HMS Raleigh in Cornwall.

The course culminates in the passing-out parade attended by families and friends when Jamie was persuaded by his classmates to publicly pop the question to his girlfriend Aisha Ratcliffe.

As the order was given for the recruits to dismiss Jamie dropped down on one knee and fortunately for him Aisha said yes.

The couple have been together for eight years and met through mutual friends.

Jamie said: "I was going to propose before, but I couldn't find a suitable time or place to do it, so I decided to wait and do it in front of everyone at my passing-out-parade. With everything I've achieved in training, it's like the start of a new life for us and I was 100 per cent confident she'd say yes."



● Jamie and Aisha

Aisha, 22, said: "I was in shock. It was so nice and I think he picked a perfect time to propose."

Jamie is a former pupil of Christ The King Catholic School and prior to joining the Royal Navy he worked in a warehouse.

Jamie will now undergo ten months training to qualify as a Seaman Specialist at HMS Raleigh and HMS Collingwood.

Gurkhas given lesson about RN

FIFTY Gurkhas learnt all about the modern Royal Navy during a visit to one of the newest warships in the Fleet.

The Nepalese soldiers from 2nd Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles were given a tour of Type 45 destroyer HMS Daring at Portsmouth Naval Base.

The visit was aimed at giving the Kent-based Gurkhas an understanding of the roles and capabilities of the 21st-Century Navy and in particular how it operates with its new hi-tech systems.

They were shown the ship's operations room – the fighting heart of the ship – plus the bridge and control centre where the vessel's machinery is run from.

Her Commanding Officer, Cdr Phil Dennis, said: "I was delighted to welcome gurkhas on board."

"It was a particular pleasure when you consider the long and illustrious service the Gurkhas have given to the United Kingdom."

"They learnt all about a Type 45 destroyer, including our primary role of area air defence using our Sea Viper missile system."

"Visits like today reinforce the work that Type 45s and the Royal Navy are doing, in the UK and abroad, with our sister UK Armed Services."

Among the visitors was Capt Dillikumar Rai. He said: "The main purpose of the visit was to give an opportunity for the soldiers to see the Royal Navy base itself and an understanding of its roles and responsibilities. Daring was the highlight. Being able to see the size and scale of a warship and see the technology and what weapons the ship is equipped with compared to a rifle (which is what the soldiers are used to handling) was of great interest."

The Gurkhas were also treated to tours of HMS Warrior and HMS Victory at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

Dream come true for top RN coach

A ROYAL Navy physical trainer has become the first woman to land a top coaching post.

PO Donna Chapman has been appointed head coach of the RN School of Physical Training's arduous PT course. She's the first woman to take up the role since the school's formation in 1888.

The 30-year-old is putting 17 students through their paces on the gruelling six-month course as they strive to qualify as leading physical training instructors.

Donna said she felt extremely proud at making history in the tough world of RN physical training.

"I had my heart set on this role since I became a physical trainer in the Navy in 2008."

"Becoming the number one coach is the pinnacle within our branch and I'm loving every minute of it. It's hard work but well worth it."

Donna's typical working day starts at 6.30am and she does not leave the office before 10pm.

"As well as the physical coaching of the students there's also the planning of the lessons. You've got to keep on top of



● PO Donna Chapman at work at HMS Temeraire

it – planning and preparation is everything. But when you see how each student develops over the course and see how everything I teach them takes effect, it is worth all of the hard graft."

The course content includes circuit and weight training, strength and conditioning, fitness testing, sports science and diet

and nutrition. Students also cover basic coaching in a variety of sports including football, hockey, volleyball and boxing plus topics such as event management and income generation.

The Open University recognises the quality of training as it counts towards a foundation degree in sport and fitness.

Donna, who lives in Chichester

with her husband Thomas and their nine-year-old daughter Lauren, joined the Navy's warfare branch at 17.

She has taught physical training on board HMS Cornwall in the Gulf and at shore bases in Scotland and Cornwall. Like all number one coaches she was hand-picked having shown immense talent and potential.

WO1 Wayne O'Kell, training officer at HMS Temeraire in Portsmouth where the school of physical training is based, said: "To become a number one instructor you have to be an expert in many things such as gymnastics, rope climbing and leadership, and you have to be physically very strong."

"Also you have to be among the top in your peer group on the Petty Officers' PT course. Donna is proving an excellent appointment and is a credit to the branch."

AET Paul Sykes, 25, said: "She has a professional approach and I think she's stern but fair."

"She let's us know when we're doing well, but when you've got to improve she also makes that very clear."

Take kids to work

THIRTY-SIX children of Naval Base employees visited the site for the annual Kids at Work day at HMNB Clyde.

Accompanied by their parents, the young visitors were treated to an action-filled day that also gave them an insight into the broad range of activities undertaken at the base.

A visit to the bomb disposal experts at Northern Diving Group (NDG), the Royal Marines of 43 Commando and to a Royal Navy P2000 patrol boat were all included.

There was also the opportunity to take to the water with MOD Police (MDP) Officers from the Clyde Marine Unit, see some of the work performed by the MDP's dog handling section, as well as tour the base's Fire Station courtesy of the Defence Fire and Rescue Service.

Among those attending were Base Building Co-ordinator Karen Pritchard and her 13-year-old daughter, Ella.

"We thoroughly enjoyed the



● Karen Pritchard and her daughter Ella

police boats," said Karen. "The weather was gorgeous on the way out, but coming back in was a bit wet. It was a really well organised day."

She added: "I've taken my two sons, Connor and Declan, into the base in the past but this is the first time that Ella has attended. Connor has now joined the Navy."

Take dad to work

COMMANDOS from Plymouth-based 42 Commando had the rare opportunity to welcome their family and friends into the workplace to have a taste of life as a Royal Marine.

Proud fathers and sons of serving Royal Marines were invited to the camp at Bickleigh Barracks for an insight into their relatives' careers.

Throughout the day they had the opportunity to abseil using military techniques, fire assault rifles and learn some of the survival techniques which allow the Marines to operate for extended periods of time in some of the harshest climates in the world.

WO2 'Nige' Perkins said: "This has been a great opportunity for the officers, warrant officers and senior members of 42 Commando to share a memorable day at the unit with their close family members."

42 Commando Royal Marines are one of three elite battalion-sized units which make up the global punch of 3 Commando Brigade.

Sailor lands on his own island for the first time

THIS is my island.

Rear Admiral Nick Lambert – one of the RN's most seasoned explorers – unfurls a modified White Ensign with his wife Beverley (centre) on British soil (well, rocks and ice).

This is Lambert Island, a remote, forbidding rocky outcrop close to the foot of the earth, named in honour of the officer's efforts to chart the waters around Antarctica and preserve its unique environment.

The island – located at 62° 22' 16.0" S, 59° 45' 49.0" W, about 500 miles from Cape Horn and 700 miles from the Falklands – can be found in the Aitcho (pronounced H-O, for Hydrographic Office) archipelago.

It was one of several previously-untitled isles in the chain, off the South Shetlands, which were formally named after people and organisations associated with research around the frozen continent a couple of years ago.

Once a popular hunting ground for the sealing industry, Lambert and surrounding islands are now on the eco-tourist trail – which helped the admiral and his wife pay their inaugural visit.

"I'm overwhelmed, honoured, chuffed, delighted and more than humble – not many people can claim that an island is named after them," Admiral Lambert said of his first visit to his island, which is about 350ft long and 150ft across (at its widest point).

His wife was equally impressed by the barren, uninhabited island.

"It was a wonderful and unforgettable experience – thrilling on so many levels," she said.

"When friends and family ask what it was like, I feel incapable of even beginning a description as I could not do the experience justice. As they say: you had to be there."

As a captain, Admiral Lambert commanded ice patrol ship HMS Endurance for a couple of years in the mid-Noughties, and later served as the UK's National Hydrographer.

Today he maintains his association with the region as chairman of the Friends of the Scott Polar Research Institute.



● Rear Admiral Nick Lambert with wife Beverley on Lambert Island, pictured on the right, off the South Shetlands



Humbling mission

WITH a look of fear in his eyes, four-year-old Maliko Izic looks up at Royal Navy Medical Assistant Morwenna Nichols.

Dehydrated and with an inflamed knee he, plus his mother and father, spent four days in the middle of the Mediterranean – three of 117 people rescued by Britain's flagship HMS Bulwark on her mercy mission to prevent migrants drowning as they try to reach Europe from North Africa.

Maliko was the only child on a dangerously-overcrowded inflatable boat – one of three such craft encountered by Bulwark in a single day.

The treatment he received – and the look on his face two days later when safely landed in Italy – is symbolic of the compassion and care shown by sailors and Royal Marines to more than 700 people rescued during Operation Weald, the UK's response to the growing humanitarian crisis.

When Royal Marines carried the four-year-old Nigerian on to one of those craft, Morwenna went straight to him.

"He was very dehydrated and out of it – as you can see by his expression," said the 26-year-old from Penryn, near Falmouth. "He was awake and maintaining his own airway so I gave him a bottle of water with a sachet of electrolytes added to revive him and replace lost sugars and salt."

A few minutes later, and after tending to other people brought on board the 97ft landing craft, she returned to see how Maliko was progressing – and found his mother and father had now been rescued.

"This operation does tug on the heart strings," said Morwenna, whose 20-month-old son Hugo is at home in Cornwall with her partner Kye Beasley, also in the Royal Navy.

She added: "It makes me very proud and very humble to think that I may have helped someone less fortunate than myself and my family – and it's a reminder not to take things for granted."



● Above: Maliko Izic is treated by RN Medical Assistant Morwenna Nichols; Below: Maliko is carried aboard HMS Bulwark in the Mediterranean



Music unites forces

MILITARY musicians from the Royal Australian Navy Band paid a visit to the Royal Marines School of Music to perform with young Royal Marines musicians.

The visit to the school, based in HM Naval Base Portsmouth, was part of the Australian Navy's ten-day visit to the UK.

HMAS Anzac is currently deployed on Northern Trident 2015, and arrived in Portsmouth after visiting Greece, Gallipoli, Turkey, Italy and Malta.

HMAS Anzac will go on to visit France, Spain, Morocco, South Africa and Mauritius, before arriving home, after a six-month deployment, next month.

LS Bruce McIntyre, who plays percussion and has served with the Royal Australian Navy Band for 12 years, said: "It's a real pleasure to be here at the Royal Marines School of Music playing with some young trainees just starting out on their careers."

"We've received a really warm welcome and look forward to continuing the close relationship between the Royal Australian Navy Band and the Royal Marines Band Service."

The musicians held a jazz workshop with trainees, after which they performed a series of pieces to the entire school of 70 trainees and staff.

Capt Sam Hairsine RM, Assistant Director of Music (Training) at the Royal Marines School of Music, said: "We've been really pleased to welcome some outstanding musicians from the Royal Australian Navy Band. A visit like this only strengthens the historic links between our two great countries."



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Deaths

Vice Admiral Sir John S C Lea KBE, HMS Aurochs, Talent, Birmingham, Daring, Forth, Nelson, Victory RNB, President, Neptune, Dolphin, MOD (DNOT) and RN Eng College Plymouth. May 20. Aged 91.

Capt Herbert B Parker, HMS Theseus, Blake, Ashanti, Chichester, Dunkirk, Terror, Osprey, Mercury, Cardigan Bay, Chieftain, Hornet, MTB 5033 and MOD (DGC, DGNMT). May 24.

Capt Roger M W Porter RNR. HMS Wessex. May 24. Aged 82.

Lt Col Brian L Edwards RM. CTCRM Lymstone, 3, 42 and 45 Cdo, HMS Newcastle. Indefatigable, President, Cochrane, Centurion, Royal Prince, National Defence College Latimer, RM Eastney, SAS RM and RMFVR London. May 23. Aged 88.

Cdr Davis F Colson, HMS Kent, Lion, Blake, Indomitable, Glory, Collingwood, Excellent, Cochrane, Vernon, Nelson, Caledonia, MOD DGNMT and Portsmouth Dockyard. May 4. Aged 85.

Cdr Ashley E Cummins. HMS Hermes, Birmingham, Devonshire, Roebuck, Saker, Collingwood, President and MOD (DIS DGS Chief Polaris Exec Staff). May 7. Aged 82.

Cdr Victor J Shaw. HMS Conqueror, Tyne, Amphion, Rorqual, Sea Devil, Maidstone, Alderney, Forth, Roole, Osprey and Admiralty Underwater Weapons Establishment (AUWE). May 21. Aged 78.

Chief Officer WRNS Ruby I Brougham. May 13. Aged 97.

Inst Lt Cdr Byron S Wilson. HMS Superb, Tiger, Heron, Royal Arthur, Collingwood, Sultan, Tamar, Goldcrest, St Vincent and Victory (RNB). May 22. Aged 95.

Lt Tony 'Lofty' W C Eldridge DSC. Joined the Navy 1942 and after service in HMS Cleveland on coastal convoy duties joined HMS King Alfred in 1943 for officer training and volunteered for special service, where he began diver training then training on 'chariots' – human torpedoes. Promoted to sub-lieutenant in 1944, he took part in Ceylon Secret Operation 51 where he and PO Woolcott rode astride a chariot. They were carried by the submarine Trenchant into action in Phuket Harbour, Thailand.

Leaving Trenchant around 2200hrs, after a 6.5 mile passage they arrived under the Japanese target ship at 0030. The ship's bottom was so covered in barnacles that the magnets would not stick so they placed a clamp on the bilge keel and tied the warhead with rope to the clamp. Once attached, the timer was set for six hours later. The following morning they watched the explosion through the periscope of Trenchant; he was awarded the DSC for great courage, daring and devotion to duty. 1953 he emigrated to South Africa where he was chairman of the local South African Legion, Provincial Chairman and then Life Vice President of the South African Legion and chairman of the Naval Officers' Association (East London, S Africa). He wrote an autobiography, *Just Out of Sight*, in 1998 and left an audio-history at the Imperial War Museum. April 13. Aged 91.

Lt John Jarvis-Smith DSC. Joined the RNVR in 1941 through the Y Scheme for educationally-qualified boys who had been selected as being potential officer material. He was promoted after 12 months to midshipman and served the war in landing craft, seeing action off Sword Beach on D-Day. He took part in Operation Infatuate, Walcheren, and as a sub-lieutenant in Landing Craft Gun (Large) No 11, spent three weeks giving covering fire to troops on the left flank of the British landings. The Australian captain dispersed his officers

because of accurate incoming fire and sent Jarvis-Smith below to the wireless office. When he heard a colossal thud above, he rushed to the bridge to find that everyone had been killed or badly injured. A second hit wrecked the engine room and a third destroyed the wireless room that he had just left. He took command and on one engine manoeuvred the disabled craft alongside a hospital ship where the injured were taken aboard. He received the DSC. Later he commanded Landing Craft Tank (LCT) conveying relief supplies for the people of Caen. May 15. Aged 91.

Lt Frederick Nick Mead RNVR DSC*. Served as a seaman in the aircraft carrier HMS Victorious during the hunt for Bismarck. Started officer training at Hove in 1943 then joined the American lend-lease destroyer HMS Broadway on convoy duties in the Atlantic. 1943 he was appointed first lieutenant of HMS Watchman, part of the screen against attacks by German fast gunboats during the D-Day landings, and escorted convoys to the Normandy beachhead 1944-45. He finished the war as first lieutenant of the submarine depot ship Woolwich in Colombo and emigrated with his family to Rhodesia in 1948. May 2. Aged 93.

Lt Cdr Michael William Walton. Entered Dartmouth 1963 and served in HMS Decoy, Keppler, Antrim, Glamorgan (Falklands 1982) and several submarines. Seconded to the Royal New Zealand Navy and Royal Brunel Armed Forces (where he was known as 'Major Mike'), then worked at MOD Foxhill on the design of ships including HMS Ocean. Post RN he worked in the Defence Industry. May 30. Aged 69.

Lt James LeP Avenell RM. 40, 41 and 45 Cdo, RM Deal and ITCRM Lymstone. May 4. Aged 68.

Lt Ronald H Ayrton. HMS Ocean, Athering, 1833, 1838 and 731 NAS. May.

Lt Ian A Shuttleworth. HMS Salisbury, Daring, 705, 707, 848 NAS and RAF Linton. May 23.

Sub Lt Keith F Bull RNVR. 820 NAS. April 19.

Sub Lt John F Smith DSC RNVR. HMS Dinosaur. May 15. Aged 91.

Wilfred 'Wilt' Tovey. Served in HMS Loch Fada, Londonderry Flotilla 1949-51. Loch Fada F390 Association. May 9. Aged 86.

Lt Cdr Peter Midgley. HMS Maidstone, 1943-46.

Ronald 'Ron' Kelbrick. Chief Electrician. Served on board HMS Cheviot 1958 and a member of the association. April 27. Aged 87.

Clifford 'Speedy' Keith Pearson LM(E) Stoker. Served 1952-65 HMS Raleigh, Defender, Loch Alvie, Crossbow and Forth. May 11. Aged 81.

George Ford. Served in HMS Acteon, Maidstone and Ranpura. RN Engineroom Association. April 19. Aged 82.

Larry Ganderton ME1. Served HMS Starling, Chevron and Dolphin RN Engineroom Association. May 24. Aged 80.

Richard Harman Sto1. Served HMS Penelope 1942-43 and a member of the association. May 21. Aged 93.

Bernard Howell. Joined 1941 and served HMS Faulknor 1941-45 on Arctic convoys and D-Day Landings. Attended the 70th D-Day Anniversary in Normandy with the NVA (Wiltshire branch). Late president of HMS Faulknor Association. November 2014. Aged 90.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

Gerald Townson PO Seaman. Served 1947-72 HMS Ganges, Theseus, Agincourt, Peacock (Malta 51-53), Loch Ruthven, Newfoundland (56-58), Ursula, Salisbury, Ashanti (66) and Cleopatra. HMS Newfoundland Association, Plymouth RNA

and past treasurer and Life Member of Saltash RNA. May 18. Aged 83.

Ronald 'Ron' Hearn. RN Patrol Service in the Atlantic, Arctic, Channel and northern France, also minesweeping. Southend-on-Sea branch. April 28. Aged 92.

Wallace 'The Joker' Adams. Served 1941-45 and on board HMS Sheffield, which helped hunt down Bismarck. HMS Sheffield Association and Glasgow RNA. May 15. Aged 86.

Roy W Wood AB. Served 1946-56. Joined HMS St Vincent as a Boy Seaman, also served in Gambia, Alamein, Wizard, Ossopus (frigate), Triumph and Vanguard. Life president of Hereford RNA and member of HMS Ossopus Association. May 9. Aged 84.

Lawrence 'Larry' Ganderton ME1. Served 1952-59 HMS Starling, Bellerophon, Chevron and Dolphin. Birmingham Central branch. May 24. Aged 80.

Edward 'Eddie' Barber, Sto. Served in submarines in the Home Fleet at the beginning of the war then spent time in Australia and the Far East witnessing the signing of the surrender aboard USS Missouri. Returned to UK in Indefatigable with prisoners of war. Cardiff branch. May 24. Aged 90.

ASSOCIATION OF ROYAL NAVY OFFICERS AND RNCO

Capt Brett N Rayner. HMS Ark Royal, Fearless, Berwick, Pembroke, Drake, Warrior, Tamar, RN College Greenwich and Gibraltar Naval Base. May 23. Aged 62.

Cdr Norman I Barkaway. HMS Adamant, Forth, Cochrane, Dolphin and Osprey. May.

Cdr F E R 'Rex' Phillips. HMS Plymouth, Hermes, Jaguar, Leopard, Striker, Meon, Corunna, Boxer, Centurion, Dryad, MOD (DNPlants DPR(N) DNFC). ASWE and NATO. May 29. Aged 85.

Cdr Roy A Savill. HMS Hecla, Collingwood, Daedalus, Centurion, RN College Greenwich, RNEC Manadon and DNMT. May.

Lt Cdr Anthony W Kick. HMS Sheffield, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Warrior, Collingwood, Dryad, MOD Bath and Saudi Arabia. April 14. Aged 75.

Lt Cdr Peter Midgley. HMS Maidstone, 1943-46.

Thomas Mackenzie L/Sea. Served HMS Lightfoot 1944-46.

Donald Rayner Canteen Mgr. Served HMS Acute 1958-60.

Norman Keer PO ERA. Served HMS Coquette 1946-47.

John Brooks ERA. Served HMS Rifleman 1954-55. May.

Patrick D Bryan Sig TO. Served HMS Vesta 1944-45. May 13.

Arthur G Harvey AB. Served HMS Damsay 1949. May 25.

Cleopatra, Lynx, Messina, Palliser, Wolverton, Vernon, Osprey and Warrior. May 23. Aged 77.

Lt J M 'Mike' Draper. HMS Grafton, Charybdis, Cochrane, Collingwood and Neptune. May 22. Aged 85.

FLEET AIR ARM

Peter Doyle CPO AM1. Served 1954-67 HMS Bulwark, Bristol & District Branch. April 2. Aged 78.

Patrick Casey LA(PM). Served 1948-55. HMS Royal Arthur, Implacable, Vulture, Gamecock, Fulmar, Sanderling, Daedalus, Peregrine, Heron, Curlew, Gannet and 737 Squadron. Hanworth Branch (Treasurer), RNA Hanworth (Committee and Club Member). April 28. Aged 85.

ALGERINES ASSOCIATION

Stan G Underwood AB ST. Served HMS Ready 1944.

Maurice E Britten L/Wmn. Served HMS Persian 1944-46.

John D Siddall AB. Served HMS Jewel 1944-46.

Richard Forbes-Watson AB. Served HMS Ready 1944-45.

Dennis G Lockwood L/Sig POSM. Served HMS Maenad 1943-45.

Neil Graham Coder. Served HMS Rifleman 1943-46.

John Carter L/SA(S). Served HMS Plucky 1954-55.

Richard C Briggs AB. Served HMS Pickle 1946.

Alan Bell PO Tel. Served HMS Orestes 1943-46.

Thomas Mackenzie L/Sea. Served HMS Lightfoot 1944-46.

Donald Rayner Canteen Mgr. Served HMS Acute 1958-60.

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● Rear Admiral Russ Harding inspects the Guard at the Fleet Air Arm Awards

Picture: LA(Phot) Iggy Roberts

Aviators gather for ceremony

ONE of the largest gatherings of Fleet Air Arm personnel in recent years paraded at RNAS Yeovilton to see the presentation of awards and Fleet Air Arm trophies to squadrons and individuals.

Aviators, aircrew and air engineers from across the Navy descended on the Somerset air station as Rear Admiral Russ Harding, Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff (Aviation, Amphibious Capability and Carriers) – or ACNS (AACC) – presented a number of FAA trophies and awards, including bravery awards and operational honours.

The inaugural ceremony was also Admiral Harding's last duty as head of the FAA, before handing over the top job to Rear Admiral Keith Blount.

Operational honours and awards for personnel from Culdrose were:

Queen's Commendation for Bravery (QCB) for Lt Cdr Robin Suckling of Gannet SAR Flight, who risked his life in the rescue of two stranded climbers in gusting 50 knot winds on Buachaille Etive Mor in Glencoe in Scotland;

Queen's Commendations for Valuable Service (QCVS) presented to Lt Cdr Edwin Cooper, for his leadership of 01 Merlin Flight from 829 NAS Merlin during Op Patwin in the Philippines, and Lt Cdr Bradley Watson and Lt Paul White, both from 857 NAS, for service in Afghanistan during Op Herrick.

Lt Paul White said: "It's absolutely stunning to receive this award."

"In the FAA you are surrounded by very professional people, and to be singled out for any praise is always humbling."

The **Australia Shield**, presented to the FAA front-line squadron that achieved the highest degree of operational capability, this year goes to 820 NAS for their lead during

Entries for the Deaths and Reunions columns, and for Swap Drafts, in August's Noticeboard must be received by July 8

NOTICEBOARD ENTRIES

- Notices for this page should be brief, clearly written or typed and addressed to – The Editor, Navy News, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY, or email: edit@navynews.co.uk. If you are sending your notice via email, please include your full address and telephone number.
- Reunions appear in date order, and requests to place an entry in a particular edition cannot be guaranteed.
- Please send in Reunions at least two months (preferably three) before the month of the event.
- There may be a delay before items appear, due to the volume of requests.
- Entries are free to non-commercial organisations. Items pertaining to commercial work, books and publications for profit can only appear as paid-for advertising.
- The Editor reserves the right to edit or refuse publication of submitted notices.
- Space does not allow us to accept more than one free insert. Any subsequent notice will have to be paid for at advertising rates.

Sports Lottery

May 16: £5,000 – AB J Rice; £1,800 – LH D Thomas; £800 – AB F Simpson; £600 – LT M Eccles; £500 – Mne R O'Brien; £400 – PO A Marshall.

May 23: £5,000 – LH D Keaton; £1,800 – LH N Pallister; £800 – LT R Lewis; £600 – Cpl A Coyle; £500 – AB2 L Lacey-Hastings; £400 – LH J Bowes.

May 30: £5,000 – PO S Taylor; £1,800 – Cpl P Benford; £800 – LH M Hamlin; £600 – AB2 J James; £500 – LH S McLaughlin; £400 – WO2 J Matthews.

June 6: £5,000 – Mne J Smith; £1,800 – Mne N Jackson; £800 – AB2 J Welch; £600 – Sgt D Jackson; £500 – PO S Humphries; £400 – Cpl B Harry.

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Cadbury's a good egg on flightline

BIRDS and cats are rarely the best of friends but peregrine falcon Cadbury and his pals are the exception to the rule.

For the birds of prey are hard at work protecting the Royal Navy's new Wildcat helicopter – as well as other aircraft – at RNAS Yeovilton.

They are part of the Bird Control Unit, which is this year marking 50 years of looking out for aircraft at Royal Naval air stations.

As most birds fly below 1,000 feet and the majority of them below 500 feet, so it is the aircraft flying at low level, taking off and landing, that is the most vulnerable.

Military aircraft are exposed to a more serious risk as some exercises involve high speeds at low levels where more birds are commonly present.

Bird strikes result in a significant drain on financial, engineering and manpower resources as well as hindering flying operations.

Losses of military aircraft have been numerous and costly and in some cases lives were lost. With this in mind, in 1965 the Royal Navy implemented a bird control programme at the then RNAS Lossiemouth in Morayshire Scotland.

The trials were under the auspices of the late Phillip Glasier, one of the country's foremost falconry experts. Two Naval Petty Officers (Careless and Fraser) were trained as Bird Control falconers alongside Lossiemouth's first three peregrine falcons who were trained with mainly sea birds in mind.

Pre 1965, Lossiemouth averaged four bird strikes per month. Between 1965 and 1972 when the unit was in operation, the station did not have a single bird strike during daylight hours. In those days the average number of birds on the airfield was 650.

By the end of the 1967 breeding season, the number of pairs of gulls nesting on the airfield had fallen from around 300 to fewer than ten.

The methods used were: broadcasting the sound of birds in distress, pyrotechnics, shotguns and the most effective – falcons.

In 1972 when the RAF took over RNAS Lossiemouth the Bird Control Unit moved to its present location at RNAS Yeovilton and began operating using similar methods and in 1975 the operation was extended to include RNAS Culdrose in Cornwall.

This resulted in significant bird strike reductions at both air stations.

The falcon, being a natural predator of other birds, will clear offending flocks of birds from the airfield and its approaches more quickly, and the birds will not return

for some time after the falcon has left.

The approach areas to the main instrument runways to Yeovilton and Culdrose are inaccessible to vehicles, however the falcons can be flown in these areas. The falcon can clear many areas where a vehicle has no access.

There is the additional problem of livestock in the fields adjoining the airfields and the approaches.

In these circumstances it is more beneficial to fly the falcon thus reducing the risk of frightening the animals with pyrotechnics etc. and upsetting the local farmer.

To overcome the problem of finding a source of falcons, a breeding programme was

At this stage the young falcon is either moved to a nursery aviary or removed to commence training.

A young falcon at RNAS Yeovilton normally commences its training as early as possible.

Falcons are more affected by visual stimuli than they are by noise – an aircraft take off near by will go seemingly unnoticed.

For this reason the first few days are devoted to acceptance of the hood, which provides a calm and relaxing environment when the bird is on the fist, or travelling in the vehicle.

The falcon is then introduced to feeding on the fist; then jumping to the fist to feed. This is followed by short flights to the fist – again to feed.

The next stage in training is the introduction to the lure, which is an imitation bird or animal used to entice the falcon.

They feed on the lure for a few days before the next radical phase – the creance (a light line that can be attached to the falcon).

Flight distances from fist, block or perch to a food-laden lure is gradually increased, so that a positive food association image of the lure can be imprinted on the bird.

The critical stage in the training is reached when the falcon instantly recognises the lure as a source of food and flies directly to it.

It is the speed with which the falcon reacts to the lure that signals the progress of the training programme. The creance can then be removed for the bird to be flown free.

A falcon's flight performance is critically related to its flying weight. Falcons may grow fast, but they take time to become fit and strong and expert at flying.

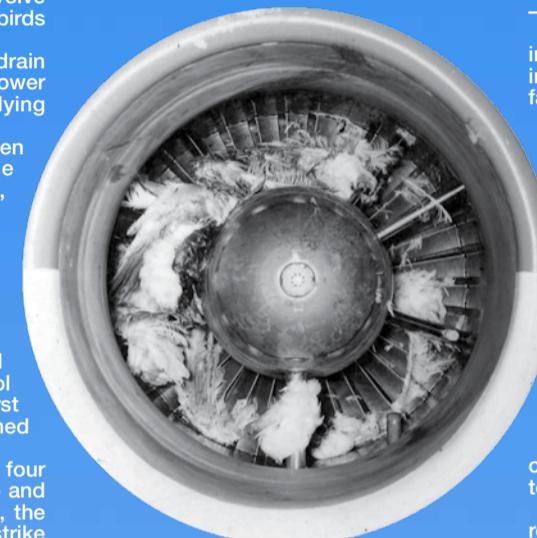
Bird Control in the Royal Navy has resulted in only one bird strike every 90,000 airfield aircraft movements.

However it is not enough to have all the latest Bird Control methods available to clear an airfield if the people involved are not experienced in their use.

To kick start the celebrations RNAS Yeovilton bird control unit in Somerset, spent two days promoting their history at the British Falconry and Raptor Fair at Chetwynd Park, Newport in Shropshire.

The personnel showcasing RN bird control stand were Nat Cole (the BCU Supervisor at Yeovilton) and Fleet Bird Control Advisor Brian Bird (yes, that's his name).

Bird control units at Yeovilton and Culdrose will be demonstrating their work at the stations' air days this month.



● An aircraft engine after a bird strike

1977 with a pair of Lanner falcons.

Today the main falcons used are peregrines. The breeding programme has now become so successful that all the falcons used at Yeovilton and Culdrose are bred domestically.

The breeding itself is on a double-clutch basis. The first clutch of eggs (normally four) are taken from the parents and placed in an incubator, and the second clutch is removed and replaced by the incubated chicks of the first clutch.

By returning the chicks to the parents it is possible to avoid the possibilities of "imprinting" the chicks with human parents with which it might identify.

The chick remains with the parents until it is feeding itself and is flying strongly.



● Coo-Coo has made HMS Bulwark its new home

It's Lt Pigeon reporting for duty, sir

WHILE busy on search-and-rescue operations in the Mediterranean, HMS Bulwark acquired a new carrier capability – a grey pigeon which made the ship its home.

The bird was first spotted in May when the ship set sail from Sicily but after a few days it was obvious that what originally appeared to be a pit-stop for the pigeon, had turned into more of a permanent vacation.

The bird, which the ship's company have fondly named Coo-Coo, can be regularly seen flitting around the ship and has quickly become a welcome working addition to the crew.

Having embarked Merlin helicopters from 814 NAS, the ship is regularly swept for debris on the upper deck which could cause damage if sucked into the engines. This laborious task is conducted by members of the ship's company but Coo-Coo is often seen trying to help.

In reward the ship's new feathered friend gets a breakfast of nuts and water from the aircraft handlers on the flight deck and loves to stop on the bridge wings where muesli and grapes are usually on the menu.

But Coo-Coo does not like to be pigeonholed and appears keen to take a more active role in the ship.



During a man-overboard exercise when all the bridge doors were open, Coo-Coo just flew right inside sending the bridge team into a flap.

A bemused Coo-Coo flew around the bridge being chased by young sailors, crashing into things causing quite a commotion, but eventually came to rest on a navigational terminal.

The Officer of the Watch was able to turn around and quickly grab Coo-Coo before placing the traumatised bird back outside.

The ship's motto is 'under thy wings I will trust', but as Lt Lee Major, who caught the bird said: "I could see it in the bird's eyes that it was thinking – in your hands I will trust!"

"Anyone could have caught it – I was just close enough at the time to pick it up and return it back outside."

"I'm just glad it was not a racing pigeon."

Trainee Officer of the Watch, Sub Lt Alice Aindow, who was also on the bridge at the time and sees the pigeon daily said: "Coo-Coo is a bit like a dolphin, you can't help but smile when you see the bird and no matter how stressful the situation, it seems to bring a calming atmosphere."

● Peregrine Falcon Cadbury keeps a protective eye on a Wildcat at RNAS Yeovilton



Ton team welcomed by Maltese

TWO-dozen members and spouses of the Ton Class Association (TCA) visited Malta to inaugurate a plaque in memory of fellow member Cdr Oliver Wright, who died last year.

Oliver had spent significant periods of his RN career in and around Malta, including being Commanding Officer of HMS Wilkieston in 1959, during which time he invented the Blackfoot funnel badge borne by 104 (later 6) Minesweeper Squadron.

Oliver also engaged with the civilian community in Sliema, undertaking a number of charitable activities.

The Town Council of Sliema allowed the TCA to install a plaque in memory of Oliver at the war memorial on Sliema waterfront, and the Mayor of Sliema, Cllr Anthony Chircop, attended the unveiling ceremony, as did friends from the Malta branch of the RNA, who then invited the TCA visitors to participate in their commemoration of the 70th anniversary of VE Day at the RNA memorial in Pieta.

Also attending the ceremony were the President of Malta, Mary Louise Coleiro, and the British High Commissioner.

Diplomacy apart, a highlight of the visit was a brief trip to sea aboard a 21-metre patrol craft of the Malta Maritime Squadron – 26 knots and tight turns in a Force 4, gusting to 5, was “quite exhilarating”, according to those who took part ...

See the August edition of *Navy News* for a full report on the RNA's national conference weekend in Folkestone.

Shipmates invited to training air station

MEMBERS of Harrogate & District branch took up an invitation to visit RAF Linton-on-Ouse, near York.

Linton is the establishment responsible for training future fast-jet pilots for the Royal Navy and RAF, using turboprop Tucano aircraft.

A group of 15 members attended and thoroughly enjoyed the visit, which was hosted by Flt Lt Mike Lumsdon, together with four Naval pilots, led by Lt Bobbie Ranscombe.

During the visit the group were given a very interesting tour of Air Traffic Control, where they witnessed trainee pilots doing ‘circuits and bumps’, and given a presentation by ATC of the area covered and how the flights are controlled.

They then visited the NAAFI (named Maple Leaf Café in remembrance of Linton having been a Canadian Air Force base during World War 2), for coffee.

After their NAAFI break they visited the Tucano Hangar (*above right*) where Lt Ranscombe and his fellow RN pilots showed them around and explained the role of the aircraft and gave them an insight to their training regime.

Some members took the opportunity of sitting in the front seat of the aircraft – after they were briefed not to press any buttons or pull any levers!



After lunch in the officers' mess, the visitors went on to take a look at the base memorial and museum room, which covered the history of the base from World War 2 up to the present day, and which proved to be most poignant and interesting.

During the war there were a large number of Canadian Air Force personnel from No 9 (RCAF) Bomber Group

distributed around various air stations north of Harrogate, including Tockwith, Rufforth and Marston Moor.

There is a military cemetery at Stonefall, in Harrogate, adjoining a municipal cemetery, which is managed by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Nearly all the 988 World War 2 burials at Stonefall are airmen, and around two-thirds of them

are Canadian aviators, many of whom died of their injuries in the military wing of Harrogate General Hospital.

Shipmates from Harrogate & District branch attend an annual memorial ceremony, in September, to remember the fallen.

There are also 23 Servicemen from World War 1 buried or commemorated at the cemetery.

Gallipoli Division honoured

THE Princess Royal joined sailors from HMS Collingwood as they remembered a dark day in Naval history exactly 100 years before.

On June 4 1915 the Collingwood Battalion of the Royal Naval Division – sailors fighting as soldiers – was cut down as it tried to capture a Turkish stronghold at Gallipoli.

By the end of the attack more than 500 men had been killed or injured – the Division had, in the words of Sir Ian Hamilton, the expedition's commander, been “practically destroyed”.

A century later, sailors and civilian personnel from the division's namesake, the Royal Navy's home of warfare training in Fareham, gathered at Collingwood Corner on the A354 outside Blandford in Dorset.

It was here – at Blandford Camp – that the Naval Division trained for Gallipoli over the winter of 1914-15.

And it was here, in 1919, that a red granite obelisk was erected to those killed in the Third Battle of Krithia, as the June battles of 1915 became known.

Chaplain of the Fleet Revd Ian Wheatley led a drumhead service of commemoration for the battalion, with music from the Royal Marines Band Portsmouth.

As well as the Princess Royal, representatives of the Royal Australian and New Zealand Navies, whose men fought in the Dardanelles, were also present.

Home opened

A NEW complex of sheltered housing apartments for retired Navy and Service personnel has been officially opened after a £3.45 million modernisation programme and extension.

The Royal Navy's Matron-in-Chief, Capt Steven Spencer, officially opened Eliza Mackenzie Court in Cosham, Portsmouth – named after the Navy's equivalent to Florence Nightingale from the Victorian era.

The complex, home to 57 people, is owned and operated by Portsmouth-based Agamemnon Housing Association.

Rum doings

CHATHAM branch are about to recommission a rum tub after an extensive refit.

Isle of Sheppey branch, in the throes of decommissioning, passed on their rum tub to Chatham, where S/Ms Jim Stout and Tim Stopford carried out the work.

Jim made a matching lid, and Tom made the basic tub into the magnificent ‘Queen – God Bless Her’ that it now is.

It was hoped that the tub would be on display at the Armed Forces Day event in Gillingham as *Navy News* went to press.



Picture: Lt Peter Kershaw RNR

Escape is recalled

THIS blurred image from May 1940 – just days after the Germans invaded the Netherlands – is of a Dutch lifeboat carrying refugees across the Channel.

The picture was taken from destroyer HMS *Venomous* – and the Royal Navy was also on hand 75 years later to mark the anniversary of the little craft's escape from the clutches of the Nazis.

The lifeboat – *Zeemanshoop*, or Seaman's Hope – left Scheveningen on the day the Netherlands surrendered, carrying Jewish refugees seeking sanctuary and Dutchmen who wanted to continue the fight for their country's freedom.

And the restored lifeboat was centre of attention at the reunion in the same port 75 years later, where survivors from the voyage and relatives of those on board – including Baroness Henig, whose parents made the trip – gathered to remember the event.

More than 200 attended, including the son and daughter of Lt Cdr John McBeath, CO of *Venomous*, the ship that delivered the refugees to safety.

Also on hand was Archer-class patrol boat HMS *Trumpeter*, which welcomed the survivors on board during a day described by one participant as “joyful and moving”.

Youngsters were dressed up as Land Army and Service personnel, nurses, firefighters, Home Guard and evacuees.

They told the story of how Pershore's market gardening and farming helped keep the nation fed

during times of austere rationing.

Key events also covered included Pershore's raising of £200,000 during Warship Week in 1941 which saw the town adopt HMS *Scimitar*.

A formal act of remembrance was held after the reading of the town's Roll of Honour.

The event was organised by S/M Trudy Burge on behalf of Pershore & District branch.

Members of the branch and Pershore Naval Social Club attended the Chapel in Pershore Cemetery in numbers to commemorate former shipmates who died at the end of last year – branch founder and chairman S/M Ted Annis and S/M Eddie Bick.

Family and friends of Ted and Eddie also attended the Service, and commemorative benches were formally blessed.

The MOD has announced how it plans to mark the 70th anniversary of Victory over Japan (VJ) Day next month – see www.gov.uk/government/news/vj-day-70-plans-announced for more details.

Pupils reflect on war

MORE than 75 veterans from Pershore & District branch, Royal British Legion and Women's Section – including eight who served during World War 2 – took part in a special service in Pershore Abbey to commemorate the 70th anniversary of VE Day.

They were entertained by pupils from Abbey Park Middle School, who paid tribute to all those from the town who served their country during two world wars.

Guests included the Mayor of Pershore, the Town Clerk, and representatives of West Mercia Police and Pershore High School. The service was led by RNA chaplain Canon Richard Etheridge and RBL padre Rev Mark Jennings, but mainly consisted of the children narrating and acting out the ways that Pershore served the war effort during 1939-45.

Youngsters were dressed up as Land Army and Service personnel, nurses, firefighters, Home Guard and evacuees.

They told the story of how Pershore's market gardening and farming helped keep the nation fed



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Anniversary tea party

IN March 1975, a handful of former Naval men met in a pub in Cambridge.

A strong bond was formed, and the Cambridge branch of the RNA was formed.

Over the years membership grew to more than 200 – the branch won the trophy for most new members one year – and in 1978 the branch standard was dedicated in King's College Chapel, after which a parade through the city (including Royal Marines Band) ended with a drumhead service.

More recently, membership has declined through illness and shipmates crossing the bar, so the branch's 40th anniversary was celebrated in a quieter fashion; afternoon tea with the Mayor in her parlour and a celebratory lunch in a local hotel, attended by 22 members.

New shipmates are always welcome – five have joined this year alone – and the branch meets on Monday evenings at the Joint Services Club on Barnwell Road in Cambridge.

Retro lunch

MARKET Harborough branch commemorated the 70th anniversary of VE Day with a 1940s-themed tri-Service lunch in a local hotel.

Items on the menu included Lord Woolton Pie (a wartime vegetable pie) and Spam Hash.

The lunch was attended by 60 veterans and friends.

The branch standard was paraded in the town square and a service conducted by the branch padre, followed by community singing and refreshments provided by the district council.

The following day members of the branch visited a retirement home to join in celebrations, dispensing paper White Ensigns and paper sailor hats.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery submarine in our May edition (right) was HMS Aeneas, which appeared as the fictitious M1 on the James Bond film *You Only Live Twice*.

The correct answers were provided by Mr T Hughes, of Bristol, who wins our £50 prize.

This month's ship (above), was launched in Portsmouth in May 1967, and during her RN career won a South Atlantic Battle Honour as well as serving in tasks such as the Cod Wars, Beira Patrols and Armilla Patrols.

Decommissioned by the RN in the summer of 1993, she saw further service as a training ship in the Indian Navy until 2012, 44 years after she was first commissioned.

1) What was her name in the Royal Navy, and 2) what name did she take on as an Indian ship?

We have removed her pennant number from the image.

Complete the coupon and send

MYSTERY PICTURE 245

Name
Address
My answers: (1).....
(2).....

Ceremonies honour heroic wartime pilot

THE first naval aviator to receive Britain's highest decoration has been honoured with three separate services marking his bravery 100 years ago.

Flt Sub Lt Reginald 'Rex' Warneford became an instant hero across the Allied nations in June 1915 as the first man to down a German airship – the feared Zeppelins – in aerial combat high above Evere, near Brussels in Belgium.

And within a day of his exploits he was awarded the Victoria Cross by King George V – the first of only four fliers in the history of RN aviation to do so.

But just ten days after his stirring exploits, and while still being feted by the international media, the 23-year-old pilot was killed performing a test flight of a new aircraft outside Paris.

He was buried with full honours in Brompton Cemetery in West London, an occasion attended by 55,000 people.

It was there, a century later, that Capt Andy Harris laid a wreath in his memory on behalf of today's Senior Service and Fleet Air Arm – successor to the Royal Naval Air Service of 1915 – during a service of remembrance and thanksgiving.

The event in Brompton was mirrored by ceremonies in Devon and Wiltshire.

In Exmouth, where the pilot's mother lived, a memorial stone has been installed and a flypast was staged by a Royal Navy



● A dramatic interpretation of Sub Lt Rex Warneford's encounter with a Zeppelin over Belgium in 1915 – the painting is at the Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovilton

Merlin and Chipmunk trainer from the RN Historic Flight, while residents of Highworth, near Swindon, erected a stone on a podium in the town centre – the family has been associated with Highworth for more than 700 years.

'Reckless' Rex Warneford, as comrades dubbed him, destroyed Zeppelin LZ37 as it returned to its base in Belgium, dropping four 20lb bombs on to the Leviathan. The blast not only brought down the German airship, but threw Warneford's Morane-

Saulnier monoplane upside down and damaged it.

He was forced to make an emergency landing behind enemy lines, fix a fuel leak with his cigarette holder, then return to base.

"Warneford's is a real Boy's Own story," said Sue Eagles, Campaign Director for the Fly Navy Heritage Trust which is dedicated to keeping alive the memory of naval aviators and their aircraft.

"Flying a very basic aeroplane in the dark would have been

extremely challenging.

"Combat flying was in its adolescence at best, while combat flying at night was not even in its infancy.

"As if bursting the airship, being flung upside down, righted in the air and forced to descend into enemy territory was not remarkable enough, only the most imaginative film producer would then have allowed our hero to succeed in restarting his engine, take off again from a field in the early hours and return home in time for breakfast."

Trip down memory lane

A GROUP of former sailors from the South Molton and Tiverton Royal British Legion enjoyed a trip down memory lane during a visit to HMS Raleigh in Cornwall.

The group of nine retired sailors, who had all completed training at HMS Raleigh, were among a party of 40 Royal British Legion members.

Among the group were father and son Peter and Nick Crow.

Peter joined the Royal Navy in 1946 and served for two years, while Nick followed in his father's footsteps in 1969, serving for seven years in small ships and ashore at HMS Osprey, Portland.

During their visit, following RBL tradition, the group laid a wreath outside St Paul's Church within the base as a mark of respect to fallen comrades.

They were also given a guided tour of the Royal Navy

Submarine School and Heritage Centre, where they were able to see how training has progressed.

To finish off their day-trip they were among the guests invited to witness the passing-out parade, marking the end of basic training for the latest Royal Navy recruits.

Visit organiser Christopher Bell said: "We organise an annual visit to a military facility."

"Our branch members get a great deal of pleasure from these

Tributes paid to midshipman

MORE than 200 people attended the unveiling of a commemorative stone in honour of Midshipman George Drewry at the Central Park Cenotaph in East Ham, London.

This was the first such ceremony of five which mark the heroic actions that earned five Newham residents the VC during World War I.

Drewry tried to carry a wounded soldier ashore – until the casualty was killed by a bullet – during the Gallipoli landings and then tried to keep small lighters in a row under ferocious Turkish fire so troops could get ashore at Cape Helles on the first day of the ill-fated 1915 campaign.



● Chichester branch's wreath is laid at the Naval Service Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum

Branches explore arboretum

CHICHESTER branch organised a pilgrimage to the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas in Staffordshire.

They were joined by comrades from other local RNA branches as well as members of the Royal Sussex Regimental Association.

Everyone had a particular group of memorials that they wished to visit, including a number of monuments to particular branches of the Senior Service, ranging from submariners to the Fleet Air Arm.

For the Navy personnel the recently dedicated, and very striking, memorial to the Naval Service was of particular significance.

Everyone was surprised at the sheer extent of the Arboretum as well as its diversity – to see it properly at least a day is necessary, two would be better.

For those who found walking not so easy there were a number of options, from individual buggies to the land train.

■ Members of Liskeard branch made the long journey from Cornwall to spend a full day at the Arboretum.

The group of 14 started with the centrepiece of the arboretum, the Armed Forces Memorial which stands on small man-made hill, then toured the main monuments – and like their shipmates from Chichester, they were particularly struck by the Shot at Dawn feature, which commemorates those who were shot for cowardice in World War I.

"An amazing, absorbing and quite simply unforgettable day" was the verdict.

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↓ admin@royalnavalassoc.com

↓ 023 9272 3747

↓ www.royal-naval-association.co.uk

Naval Quirks

AS THE SLOW MERCHANT CONVOYS WEREN'T GETTING SUPPLIES THROUGH TO ROMMEL IN LATE 1941...



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navygraphics 15/129





Mersey misery for reigning champs

RESERVISTS from the three UK military services – and foreign colleagues – gathered in Liverpool to test their physical, mental and military skills.

More than 250 men and women descended on Altcar Camp for the 31st annual Exercise Altcar Challenge.

The Royal Naval Reserve and the Royal Marines Reserve sent participants, and volunteers, to help run the competition which saw teams of four taking on a series of challenges that pushed them to the limit.

It is the only annual tri-Service international competition organised exclusively for reserve forces in the UK and with RMR Merseyside the reigning champions the battle to snatch the title from Liverpool was fierce.

The weekend of challenges included the RMR assault course, a battlefield casualty first aid

exercise, Improvised Explosive Device (IED) detection, and an innovative method of fire-fighting in a tent which was run by HMS Eaglet, Liverpool.

But the 20-stage competition was a real attraction for AB Ed Sheppard of HMS Ferret, who, despite planning for his wedding, still managed to get in all of his training.

He said: "This competition was an example of how we use the different skills we learn as reservists, it was great fun and I was gutted to miss out last year through illness." There was also a strong international presence at Altcar Camp over the weekend with teams coming from Poland, France, Estonia and the Czech Republic.

L/Cpl John Cadwallader and Mne Marco Altibrandi, from RMR Merseyside, ran the assault course and saw teams giving it their all.

L/Cpl Cadwallader said: "I was part of the winning team

last year and so could recognise those teams that were going to be hard to beat.

"The weekend was a superb way for teams to push themselves and grow as a unit, but it was not quite the same as when I deployed on Herrick 12 with 40 Commando Royal Marines."

However despite a large contingent from the Maritime Reserves, it was not to be their year.

RMR Merseyside lost their crown to the very well drilled Estonian team but still managed to finish a credible fourth out of 45 competing teams.

● From top left, fire-fighting in a tent; L/Cpl John Cadwallader and Mne Marco Altibrandi demonstrate the correct way to complete the assault course; The battlefield first aid stage of the challenge; AB Liam Steel, 21, of HMS Eaglet, plays a convincing role as a casualty

● AB Darryn Adams, 18, of HMS Scotia conducts a breaking-cover drill during Exercise Altcar Challenge

Pictures: LA(Phot) Caroline Davies



Medals for super seven

MORE than three decades after the Falklands Conflict ended seven Naval Reservists have been awarded their South Atlantic Medals at a small ceremony held at RNAS Yeovilton.

The group of Naval Reservists had served across the Fleet Air Arm's units in the months after 12 July 1982, the date for the end of hostilities, which qualified members of the Armed Forces for the South Atlantic Medal.

But last year a long-awaited independent review ruled that this time should be extended by an additional three months to October 21 1982, covering a period when a threat to British forces was still at a heightened state.

Presenting the medals at the RNR Air Branch Officers annual conference was Cdre Jamie Miller, Naval Regional Commander, Wales and Western England (NRCWWE). He served as a Lt Cdr onboard HMS Coventry during the conflict, before she was attacked by a wave of Argentinean A4 Skyhawks. They released three 250 kg bombs which hit the ship just above the waterline and caused the abandonment and eventual sinking of HMS Coventry.

"It is a great honour to be presenting these South

Atlantic medals to you today", said Cdre Miller. "It all seems so very long ago now, but it is good that you have all been recognised for your brave efforts."

Receiving medals were; Cdr Ian Halliday, WO1 Andy Mathews and Lt Cdr Jerry Newall, who all served in HMS Illustrious, Air Engineers Lt Cdr Stuart Meikle of 824 NAS and CPO Andrew 'Whisky' Walker of 845 NAS and Cdr Robin Wain, who served in HMS Brazen. The seventh and final Falklands medal was presented to Lt Cdr Simon Smith, who during the Falklands was a Senior Aircraftman with the RAF, but later transferred to the Senior Service. He also picked up his Operational Service Medal (OSM) for OP Silkman, where he was the Air Traffic Officer onboard HMS Ocean off the coast of Sierra Leone in 2001.

Other awards were: Volunteer Reserve Service Medals (VRSM) to Lt Cdr Gareth Mills and Lt Craig Compain for seven-and-a-half years' Reserve service; A first clasp after 12½ years service to his VRSM medal for Lt Cdr Steve McArdell; A second clasp after 17½ years to Lt Cdr Bill Powell and third clasps to their VRSM's went to Lt Cdr Suzanne Clark and Lt Cdr Ed Oates for 22½ years Reserve service each.

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Sterling MOS recognised

THIRTY years of helping to protect and promote the Senior Service in the Fourth Estate was marked with a letter of appreciation from the Second Sea Lord and an anniversary get-together.

The Public Affairs Branch of the Royal Naval Reserve was formed in the aftermath of the Falklands Conflict when the need to provide specialist support on dealing with the press, TV and radio became evident.

Today – and renamed the Media Operations Specialists – the 60-strong branch has been mobilised 68 times in the past dozen years, not just for Iraq, Libya and Afghanistan, but also ongoing operations in the Gulf and Indian Ocean.

Members of the branch past and present were joined by Cdr Gary Sutton, the RN's head of media and communications, at HMS President in London for the birthday event, at which the current head of the MOS, Cdr Mark Hankey, stressed the technological changes faced over the past three decades.

"Since the original version of Microsoft 1:1 we've battled together through numerous iterations of military information technology to deliver successful outcomes in today's digitally-enhanced news environment," he said.

"We continue to provide valued advice and additional capability wherever we serve across UK and international headquarters: Navy Command, PJHQ, EU Naval Force HQ, NATO maritime command centres, the Combined Maritime Force, the MOD and across deployed Fleet units, while also supporting many of the UK's Naval Reserve units with roles in recruitment, engagement, training and media support."

Cdr Sutton said over the past 30 years the media reservists had made "a very significant contribution" to the RN in the media realm.

He continued: "Managing messages, supporting information campaigns and delivering media effect is now firmly recognised by senior leaders and commanding officers as a critical component in the Royal Navy's war-fighting ability – we all get the vital importance of this role."

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Are you thinking about adopting? Keeping it all ETICCing over Faraday

SERVICEMEN and women make exceptional adoptive parents, according to the Armed Forces charity SSAFA – which runs the only national adoption agency catering specifically for the military.

Although postings, deployments and misconceptions about the military lifestyle can put Service families looking to adopt at a disadvantage, SSAFA believes in reality they have significant strengths and are particularly well-placed to parent vulnerable children who've had a difficult start in life. The charity found homes for 18 children with Forces families last year.

"People in the Forces tend to be resilient, tenacious and resourceful," said Corienne Strange, the charity's adoption service manager. "We find them ideal parents for some of the most vulnerable young people."

"More often than not they also have a can-do attitude, a sense of humour and an ability to assist children who have experienced difficulties, all excellent qualities in a potential adopter."

Although Service life can make it difficult for partners to pursue a career, being able to offer the stability of a home-based parent for children is a distinct advantage for couples seeking to adopt.

Many Forces families live behind the wire and are also able to provide a secure home environment where there are safeguarding concerns. In addition, schools in military areas have a wealth of experience when it comes to supporting new arrivals.

While potential prospective adopters can apply to local agencies, SSAFA's adoption team understands the challenges of military life and can guide and support Service families through the adoption process and beyond.

Regular postings and deployments can make it difficult for serving personnel to adopt through local authorities but SSAFA is able to support them through the entire process – no matter where they move and no matter how long it takes.

"Our dedicated staff work tirelessly to help ensure that serving personnel have the same opportunity to be assessed as adoptive parents as anyone else," Ms Strange said.

"We are always looking for people who can offer children, including groups of two or more siblings, a loving and supportive family for life."

"There is so much support available to Forces families when they adopt. Our staff work with their employers to ensure housing and educational needs are met and we also offer a wide range of extra support to adoptive families, including practical help and assistance from local volunteers on the ground, and a dedicated post-adoption social worker who adopters can speak to at any stage in their post-placement journey."

■ For more information contact SSAFA's adoption service on 020 7463 9326 / adoption@ssafa.org.uk or see www.ssafa.org.uk.

JULY looks to be another busy month for the Faraday team as more of the initial programme work streams move towards becoming day-to-day business.

The revised (v1.1) ETICC ETME Career Development Journal (CDJ) has now been accepted by branch management and Sultan training staff; this version will be issued to all ETMEs completing ETICC. It has also been forwarded to all those ETICC graduates currently training in the Fleet.

If you have not received your copy, contact the team here at Faraday. An RNTM will be issued shortly to formally announce that v1.1 is now the formal training record for all ETICC trained 'stokers'.

Encouraging reports are being received from employers across the Fleet on the ETICC ETME graduates. The revised approach – together with the additional training being delivered – is already proving beneficial when undertaking engineering tasks onboard, with both individuals and units feeling the benefits.

By the end of the month, Faraday intends to begin publishing sample Career Development Journals for all rates up to and including CPO across all engineering streams. This will allow voluntary use of CDJs for those personnel who wish to experience using Individual Competence Framework (ICF)-based training before undertaking a new ICF-based career course.

It will also enable us to garner valuable feedback on the content, style and usage of the journals ahead of the new ICF courses

coming online. The journals will be made available for download from the Faraday intranet and Defence Connect sites.

Final policy for the enduring fast-track scheme and all Provisional Exams (PEs) will be passed to branch management this month. These key Faraday initiatives will start to become day-to-day business before the end of the year. RNTMs will provide further detail upon release this month.

All the new engineering stream badges are now available and a second order of badges has been submitted to meet the demand until the formal logistic support contract is in place. All personnel are reminded that new stream badges need to be on their uniforms by September 1.

Faraday has been engaging with the wider engineering branch, working on a comprehensive plan to fully embed Faraday engineering principles into the waterfront and front-line units and details will follow.

Embedding the core Faraday principles is key to EGS development. The coaching and mentoring of all engineers, along with the championing of improved engineering practice and training, is central to how we recover and advance as a Naval engineering community.

If you have any questions or comments on Programme Faraday, contact WO1 Robbie Robson on 93832 7441/naveg_spt-hum_cap_w01a. The Intranet site can be found via the A-Z.

Elation for Elaine

LOGISTICS officer Lt Cdr Elaine Boyd was singled out for recognition at the 2015 FTA Everywoman in Transport and Logistics Awards.

The officer, who serves at PJHQ in Northwood, was named team leader of the year in an event at the London Hilton on Park Lane.

The awards, attended by hundreds of business figures and leaders, have been running for the past eight years and celebrate the work of women considered to be the finest in their fields in the transportation and logistics sectors.

Lt Cdr Boyd was among winners picked out from bus companies, supermarket giant Asda, London Underground and international parcel delivery service DHL.

Where to look

RNTMs

RNTM 173/15 Introduction of the Naval Service Personal Information Check Dashboard

RNTM 168/15 Desmond Wettern RN Media Award 2015

RNTM 166/15 Revised Policy for the Creation of New JPA RN Exercise (MA10A) and Event (MA10 B) Positions

RNTM 163/15 Royal Navy Royal Marines Welfare (RNRMW) Deployment Support

RNTM 162/15 Learn to fly with the RNSA at the Portsmouth Naval Gilding Centre 14-18 Sep 15

RNTM 160/15 WiFi within Navy TLB

RNTM 158/15 Defence Learning Environment – Naval Service Implementation

RNTM 157/15 Eligibility Criteria for Promotion to WO2 ET(MESM) and WO2 ET(WESM)

Galaxy briefs

10-2015 Naval Service Outstanding Contribution Award

DIBS

13/15 Publication of the results of the Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS) 2015 report

15/15 Publication of the Tri-Service Reserves Continuous Attitude Survey results (RESCAS)

DINS

DIN 2016DIN01-115 Term-time absence guidance

DIN 2015DIN01-120 Removal of requirement of a 30-day gap between Regular Service and Full-Time Reserve Service (FTRS)

DIN 2015DIN01-133 Professional Registration for Royal Navy Weapon Engineers and Technicians [Supersedes DIN 2013DIN01-036]

DIN 2015DIN02-001 Government Security Classification (GSC) policy: Industrial Security Implementation Guidance and Clarification

DIN 2016DIN04-116 Defence Equipment Support (DE&S) Transfer of Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) suits, boots and gloves management functions and change of contact details

DIN 2015DIN07 AT sea kayaking: planning expeditions to Cyprus in 2016 [This DIN supersedes DIN 2014DIN07-061]

DIN 2015DIN07-107 First aid training in the RN, RM, RNR and RMR [Supersedes DIN 2014DIN07-164]

DIN 2015DIN08-005 Non-Entitled Accommodation Rates [This DIN replaces DIN 2014DIN08-005]

DIN 2015DIN08-007 Claims for loss of, or damage to, personal property (Regulation Claims) [Supersedes DIN 2014DIN08-009]

DIN 2015DIN09-010 Armed Forces Day 27 June 2015 [Supersedes DIN 2014DIN09-007]

DIN 2015DIN09-011 The Oliver Sword 2015 [Supersedes DIN 2014DIN09-010]

Leaving the RN? Try the RNR...

Project Firefly

notably engineering, chefs and PTIs.

A new training division has also been established to ensure the training provided to the Volunteer Reserve is of the same high quality and standard afforded to Regular personnel.

In addition, the joining age has increased to 57 for RNR and 52 for RMR with new contracts being introduced in line with the New Employment Model.

For those considering the Maritime Reserves there are increased opportunities for your service skill sets: for instance anyone with instructing experience might relish the chance to take up a role in a unit's training division.

Those looking for flexible ways of working may find the part-time scheme an attractive option especially if trying to balance work and family, and if promotion is what you are seeking, joining the MR will afford you this opportunity too.

One recent example is Lorraine Baker,

who left the Regular Service as a CPO(CIS) in 2012 and was on the promotion signal for WO1. There are also opportunities for full time positions such as Brian Hayes – an ex-regular PTI Officer – who joined HMS Cambria and is now serving on an FTRS commitment as the RNSO.

For a commitment of just 24 days (RNR) and 26 days (RMR), benefits include:

- extra money, pension and annual bonus, all in addition to any civilian benefits secured and does not impact on any Service pension accrued;
- opportunities for continued professional development and promotion;
- remaining a part of the Naval Service and its unique way of life.

The Firefly team welcome the opportunity to travel and brief groups or conduct one-to-one interviews.

For details, speak to WO1 Paul Jones (93832 8784, navpers-resffengwo@mod.uk) or PO(Wtr) 'Buster' Brown (023 9262 8677 navpers-respta@mod.uk).

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U8 seen nothin' yet

FREGATTENKAPITÄN Jan Hackstein – Germany's Naval Attaché to the UK – admires the red bronze propeller which a century ago drove his nation's most feared naval weapon through the seas.

This once belonged to submarine U8, sent into the Channel in the spring of 1915 to destroy British shipping and starve the mother country of the Empire into submission.

A century on, the relic was returned to its original owners aboard the frigate Karlsruhe in Portsmouth Naval Base in a gesture of friendship and reconciliation.

This autumn the propeller will be rededicated at the imposing German Naval Memorial in Laboe, near Kiel, which is to its nation's seafarers what the mighty cenotaphs in Chatham, Portsmouth and Plymouth are to the Senior Service's fallen from the two world wars.

Fregattenkapitän (Cdr) Hackstein said the presentation of the propeller was "a wonderful sign" of the closeness between the two nations and navies in 2015.

"Although the German public is still a bit reserved about war and armed forces, we are seeing rising historic interest – especially on the centenary of World War 1 – and in the fate of people during the war," he said.

"So there will be interest in seeing the propeller and discovering the story of the Kaiser's U-boat and the crew."

That story reached its climax in February and March 1915 during two patrols. On the first, U8's commander, the 29-year-old *Kapitänleutnant* (Lt Cdr) Alfred Stöß, found rich pickings in the waters off Beachy Head, sending 15,000 tonnes of shipping to the Channel seabed.

But when he tried to repeat those successes on his next sortie at the beginning of March 1915 and force his way through the Dover Strait, U8 either became snared in anti-submarine nets or damaged by depth charges – or both – and was forced to surface.

Stöß and his 28 crew scrambled to safety before the guns of HMS Gurkha and Maori sent the boat to the seabed three dozen metres below.

And there she has lain ever since – except that at some stage salvage hunters raided the wreck and illegally removed the propeller.

It – and other items unlawfully taken from shipwrecks – was recovered by Kent Police last year and handed to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, who used the opportunity of the Karlsruhe's visit to Portsmouth to return it.

"This shows how times have changed," said Charles Ball, head of coastal operations for the MCA.

"We can transfer this historical artefact back to our friends, not just in commemoration of the sacrifices suffered by both nations, but also in celebration of what we have achieved since then."



Picture: Nicola Harper, BAE Systems

TWO-SIX 

Striving to make everything SIPshape

WITHIN Phase 2 of the Support Improvement Programme (SIP), the Focused Intervention Teams (FITs) have been working to build the picture of issues associated with their equipment groups (flexible hoses, internal comms, chilled water systems and davits) to identify areas to focus on and to develop the necessary action plans.

This is being supported by close engagement with our industrial partners to finalise the requirement for support. A visit to Clyde Naval Base also helped to identify issues and draw some lessons from the submarine flotilla and Sandown support areas.

At the waterfront areas, PORFLOT and DEVFLLOT engineering support teams have continued to deliver support to ships inside and outside the base port areas.

For the Devonport teams, this has meant taking to the road and providing assistance to HMS Echo in Falmouth and HMS Protector in North Shields. Ships' engineering teams are encouraged to request for this support via the published process and POC.

From a waterfront employment and enhanced support perspective, work is ongoing to develop the construct for Refit Support Groups (RSG) across the T45 and T23 community.

This work is firmly aimed at delivering improved engineering support and a rewarding waterfront workplace for our engineers, balanced against the required harmony benefits. For Devonport, the T23 RSG is working towards initial stand up in July to support HMS Argyll's upkeep.

In helping to develop

our young technicians, the Engineering Training Squadron (ETS) has just started operating with 30 ET2s embarked in HMS Northumberland and, more recently, six ET2s embarked in Sutherland. Over the coming months the ETS model will continue to develop and is also aiming to support an ETS deployment within Cougar 15.

As part of the SSMP, the team continues to look at ways of improving the support to submariners alongside and reducing 'harbour hassle'. A renewed focus on submarine-specific issues is being driven by the addition of two lieutenant commanders to the team.

Navy Command is also providing another 20 RN engineers and logisticians to Abbey Wood, who'll be joined by up to 30 contractors, on a short-term basis to provide DE&S

some support in a number of critical areas to the benefit of the general service and submarine communities.

The Maritime Support Chain Improvement Programme (MSCIP) team (consisting of RN logistics personnel based at Abbey Wood) continues to work on your behalf to address any weaknesses within the maritime support chain.

Seagoing units in UK waters will be contacted by the MSCIP

team in the coming months to arrange a visit, the aim of which is to support the logistics and engineering teams in addressing outstanding stores demands.

Thank you to all those who responded to the request for feedback in relation to conducting a targeted hand tools/RATS improvement. It's allowed us to narrow our focus; the next step is to investigate the options to take this forward.

The event held in May in

Portsmouth saw the launch of mini-competitions for prospective suppliers to the new MOD Hand Tools Framework Contract. The first competition is due to conclude by the end of July with the goal of the first deliveries in September.

If you have any questions or comments on the Support Improvement Programme please contact me, WO1 Jonnie Roome 93832 5591/navy eng spt-sip w01a.

NAVAL FAMILIES FEDERATION



THE NFF is your federation. We are here to represent and support Royal Navy and Royal Marines families.

If you want to know more about the different ways we can assist you or who's been contacting the NFF and the subjects they are talking about, head to pages 36-37 of the summer edition of our *Homeport* magazine (also available to read online).

Other key news items on our website presently include:

■ Defence Gateway to JPA: Personnel can now access their JPA statement of earnings from anywhere in the world via any internet-compatible device.

The new Defence Gateway (www.defencegateway.mod.uk) system makes information more easily accessible and all personnel automatically have an account. The Defence Learning Environment is now the single provider of all eLearning content across the Service, and access to this is only available through the Defence Gateway.

■ Moving out of Service Family Accommodation? A 'walk away cleaning scheme' is available, and a garden option has now been included.

■ Help to access credit union services: Funding has been approved to help personnel that are encountering difficulties getting credit approved.

New payroll deduction systems will allow current and former

personnel, who are in receipt of a military pension, to save with and pay off loans from a credit union directly from their salary or pension. The credit unions selected are not MOD endorsed and financial decisions remain the choice of the individual.

■ School funding from the MOD to help your Service child: Does your child attend a publicly-funded school, academy, state school or sixth-form college in the UK?

If so, why not encourage the school to submit an application to the MOD Education Support Fund?

The funds are designed to be used to help with the effects of mobility and deployment on Service children, whether that's additional support for a child with a parent who's deployed, or helping those children who may arrive after the start of term to settle in properly. The closing date for applications is September 30.

■ And after 11 and a half years with Kim Richardson at the helm, the Naval Families Federation last month welcomed its new director, Anna Wright (pictured above right).

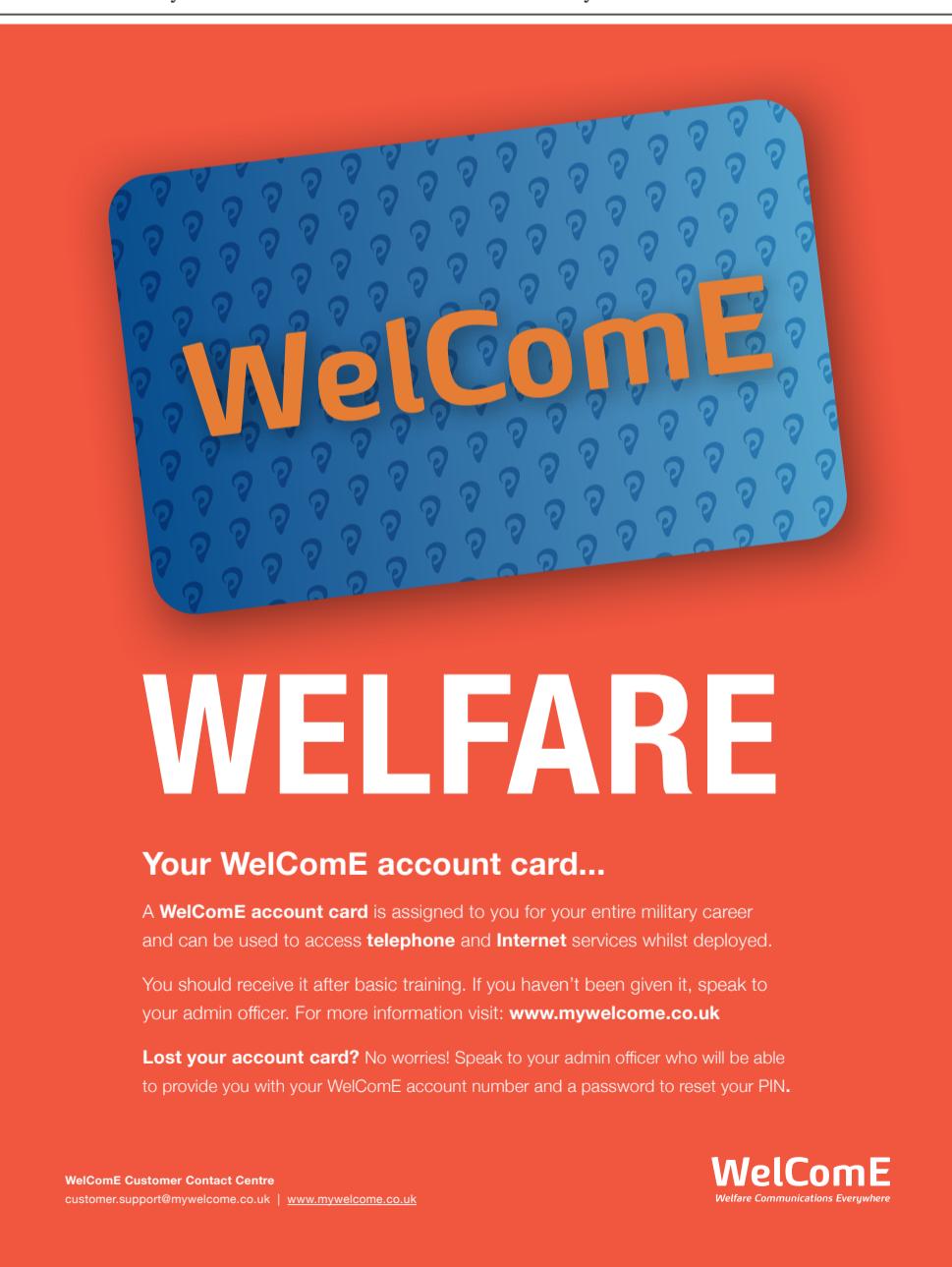
Anna served in the Royal Navy for 12 years, both as a regular and briefly as a reservist.

She's no stranger to the nomadic life of a Naval wife – her husband is still serving. The couple and their two children have lived in six different

Contact NFF

■ 023 9265 4374/admin@nff.org.uk Castaway House, 311 Twyford Avenue, Portsmouth, PO2 8RN.

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Our next Education feature will be published in the September edition of Navy News.

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A Navy in chains? Not on this evidence

A different perspective on Narvik

IT'S generally accepted that, unlike its performance a generation before, between 1939 and 1945 the RN had 'a good war'.

And yet, beyond the realms of the dedicated naval and military historians, most of the actions it fought – save the odd exception such as the Bismarck chase – have largely become anonymous.

The two battles of Narvik in April 1940 are lost in that great unknown. Unjustly. For the destruction of an entire German destroyer flotilla is one of the most stirring episodes in RN history.

It's a story which has been told before on a few occasions – chiefly by 'serious' historians.

Ron Cope makes no pretence that his *Attack at Dawn* (Clink Street, £11.99 978-1809-477) is a serious work of naval history.

Rather, it is a personal homage to the men of April 1940, especially those of destroyer HMS Hardy – among them his father Cyril, who was a torpedoman.

He's spent six years researching the story of Narvik, tracking down survivors or their families – who were generous in supplying accounts and photographs.

Those sailors paint particularly vivid pictures of the actions – and the dreadful conditions in which they were fought.

The first battle was played out in an intermittent snowstorm which – coupled with a dawn attack – caught the Germans off guard, but also meant those working on the upper decks toiled in fearful temperatures which affected man and machine.

The initial raid on Narvik was something akin to a turkey shoot – the enemy was caught napping (literally at 4am...) Watching the devastation they'd caused in the port, the Hardy men cheered 'like children at a pantomime.'

One recalled: "With stems, sterns, funnels and masts sticking up all over the harbour, making the graveyard of the ships sunk – but for the grimness of the situation, it was almost an amusing sight."

When the German destroyers untouched by the attack arrived at the scene, there was little amusement, however, as enemy shells tore through Hardy especially.

And yet, as Doug Bourton recalled, he gave no thought to the German rounds. "I can't honestly say that I felt afraid because things happened so fast," he recalled. "It's like looking at a picture; the adrenaline is flowing certainly when the enemy is in sight."

His ship suffered terribly. She was eventually beached, her captain Bernard Warburton-Lee mortally wounded (he would be awarded the VC in time).

Warburton-Lee lost two destroyers while a third was badly damaged. But he had sunk or incapacitated more than half of the Germans' invasion force.

A few days later, bolstered by battleship HMS Warspite, the RN returned to finish the job.

This is a very human addition to the body of literature on Narvik – and that's a good thing for it brings to life the men of 1940 (and their ships – often overlooked by historians in favour of the cruisers, carriers and battleships).

WHAT makes being an historian so exciting is that once in a while a new study appears that completely alters our historical views.

The more established the analysis exploded, the more exciting it is, writes Prof Eric Grove.

And J. Ross Dancy's *The Myth of the Press Gang: Volunteers, Impression and the Naval Manpower Problem in the Late Eighteenth Century* (Boydell, £75 ISBN 978 1 78327 003 3) is one of those books.

It completely alters the usually-accepted view that the Royal Navy of the Nelsonic period was so unattractive that it had to be manned largely by impressment. This was always rather implausible. Why should a fleet of the vastly-superior fighting qualities of the Royal Navy be so unattractive to the people who provided its motive power and armament mechanism?

The answer is it was not. Dr Dancy's research clearly demonstrates that the vast majority of Britain's sailors were volunteers. Impressment was only used to increase the proportion of skilled seamen required for the most demanding roles. There was great demand for such men both in Royal Navy ships and the equally-essential merchantmen whose activities the warships covered. Such men were in short supply and conscription was the only answer to maintain balanced and skilled ships' companies for the vastly-increased wartime fleet. Nevertheless, the proportion of pressed men was relatively small, about a quarter at most.

What makes this study particularly ground-breaking is its methodology. For the first time, modern information



● The good folk of London are less than impressed when a tailor is taken away in a famous etching by Georgian caricaturist James Gillray from 1789

technology has been used to carry out a systematic study of the muster books of a sample of ships – ships of the line, frigates and sloops – one each from Chatham, Portsmouth and Plymouth, each year from 1793 to 1801. The ships' muster books were imaged and the data manually entered into a database. Twenty-six points were noted for each man including name, rating, age, type of recruitment, bounty received as well as town, county and nation of birth. The total sample was 27,174 men – about ten percent of the total strength



of around 250,000 in the Revolutionary Wars period. The author manipulates these figures with great skill to produce his convincing results.

The Royal Navy of the period comes over as quite an attractive career for the young men who made it up. Although notionally wages were lower in wartime than in merchantmen – ship owners had to compete in a restricted labour market – merchant seamen often did not receive their full wages; there was also the attraction of prize money.

Contrary to legend, food was good ('three square meals per day'), free alcohol and free medical attention were available. There were pensions for dependants and opportunities for meritocratic advancement.

Landsmen facing the privations of rural life and the draconian legal system ashore found a life at sea attractive. The attractions of conservative patriotism against the revolutionary foreigners should also not be underestimated.

The author also looks at

alternative forms of conscription in mainland Europe. Neither the French nor Spanish systems come out very well from the comparison. The uncertain finances of the French Navy meant that their theoretically-superior *inscription maritime* did not work well. It also sparked armed resistance as serious, if not more so, than anti-press gang violence in Britain. The French might be able to commission more ships more quickly, but the British were always able to maintain the larger fleet, both naval and mercantile.

One argument that could be deployed against the author's analysis is that perhaps not all the 'volunteers' were truly voluntary when faced with impressment.

Dr Dancy deals with this argument well, showing that there is no evidence of increased impressment activity being reflected in voluntary recruitment. Equally, the author makes a convincing argument that the increase in numbers of men turned over from one ship to another also reflected the volunteer/pressed proportions. Far from being a problem, this practice comes over as an early attempt to provide a proper career for ratings, long

before continuous service was introduced in the mid-19th Century.

There is no doubt that the mutinies of 1797 (in which impressment was not an issue) – with the improvements in pay that resulted – made naval service even more attractive. It has often been argued that the Quota Acts of the mid 1790s brought in many disaffected landsmen into the fleet and this was a major factor in causing the mutinies. The author argues persuasively that there is no evidence for this. As he puts it: "The only means by which the Quota Acts may have been an added factor in the 1797 mutinies was the friction that they caused within the lower deck over late-coming landsmen having received higher bounties than many prime seamen who volunteered in 1793 and 1794. However, this theory is a far cry from the introduction of educated dissidents into the fleet." Indeed Dr Dancy assesses the acts as a "limited success" in helping solve the manning problems of the day.

The author, a former officer in the US Marine Corps, took his PhD under the supervision of Professor Nicholas Rodger at Oxford. The latter's seminal *Wooden World* began the rehabilitation of the Georgian Royal Navy and his student has confirmed it.

Dr Dancy, now an assistant Professor of History at Sam Houston State University, is to be congratulated on a truly important work. He points out that such is modern computer power, it will be possible to catalogue every sailor in the age of sail and analyse their origins and recruitment. It is clear that the results will probably alter commonly-held assumptions. The only problem is making these results accessible to the wider interested public. The gulf between amateurs and professional historians is already too wide.

Now, we come to the only problem – £75 is rather steep for a 213-page unillustrated volume! It needs to be made more accessible as soon as possible, either in paperback and/ or electronic publishing.

This gulf between accessibility and quality of research must be closed. Such vitally-important books as this need the widest possible readership to set the record straight at last. This is an urgent issue to which the naval historical and publishing community must address themselves.

Westland of hope and glory

THINK of Yeovil and AgustaWestland probably springs to the front of your mind.

To mark the centenary of the aircraft company, the firm's historian has gathered an anthology of work, including that of historians, pilots and aircraft fanatics.

A Quiet Country Town: A Celebration of 100 Years of Westland at Yeovil by David Gibbons (History Press, £16.99 ISBN 978-0-7509-6242-1), is a very personal history, covering not just the aircraft but the company's employees – and of course its relationship with RNAS Yeovilton.

Westland, the area's largest employer in an otherwise rural area, has seen aircraft designed, developed and manufactured since 1915. While the company has undergone many changes, the basic business of aircraft manufacture has continued. When the site was established during WW1 it was said to be outside the town boundary but is now surrounded by homes.

Yeovil was home to privately-owned company Petter Oil Engines, established in 1899 but, by the start of WW1, had developed into a major manufacturer of utility engines.

Following an offer from the Admiralty, Petters established a factory and airfield at what is now AgustaWestland.

Gibbons, who pens several of the chapters, describes how aircraft production then took off, and by the start of WW2, the company was a centre for Spitfire manufacture, producing 2,200 of the aircraft during the war years.

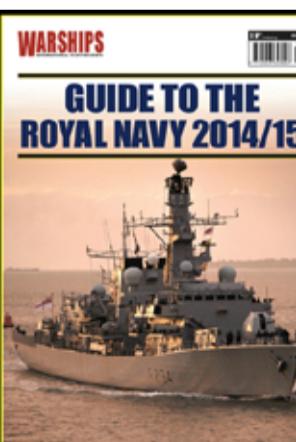
The move to producing helicopters came in 1948, starting with Sikorsky.

Gibbons, who spent many years working on the Lynx, devotes a chapter to the workhorse with a great deal of technical detail.

He also devotes chapter to the Westland Affair in the 1980s, a dark time as 800 workers lost their jobs.

The author says: "I worked at Westland throughout this period. Strangely enough, it was a good place to be; the personal relationships within the organisation were excellent, stirred on by a sort of Dunkirk spirit and confidence that the company's product was sound. Morale was high."

The personal anecdotes and extensive detail will go down well with anyone interested in aircraft.



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Units at Russian memorial

CADETS from Southwark, City of London and Greenwich, Deptford & Rotherhithe units were invited to take part in an act of remembrance to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the 'Victory over Fascism' in World War 2.

The ceremony took place at the Soviet War Memorial in Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park, Southwark, next to the Imperial War Museum.

The memorial commemorates the sacrifice of 27 million lives by the citizens and armed forces of the former Soviet Union in its joint struggle with Allied forces to defeat fascism – the only monument of its kind in the UK.

The Russian Ambassador to London attended and presented medals to a group of Soviet veterans and to British veterans of the Arctic Convoys.

This was followed by wreath-laying, for which LC Stone of Greenwich unit was wreath-bearer for Admiral Lord West, and AC Button, of Southwark unit, was wreath-bearer for Captain Sea Cadets Capt Jonathan Holloway, representing the Corps.

Success across the board

CADETS on recent Class 1 Marine Engineering courses held in SCTC Weymouth had good reason to smile at the completion of the training.

Because all candidates on the Mechanical and Electrical courses passed, some with high marks – the top scorers were in the mid to high 90s.

These courses no longer lead to a BTEC Level 2 Diploma, as some of those courses did which were held in early 2014, but they are still of significant value in demonstrating to potential employers and colleges that cadets with this qualification have already shown an interest in engineering-based subjects, and are likely to assist in the cadet being awarded a place at college, on an apprenticeship – or maybe for entry into the Royal Navy.

Of the 18 cadets on both courses some 75 per cent indicated that they wished to pursue an engineering-based career in the Royal Navy – most as ratings but some at officer level.

Among the cadets who performed particularly well were LC James Steele (Carrickfergus unit), who achieved the top score in the electrical course exam with 95 per cent, AC Maisie Davis (Enfield), who achieved second place in the electrical course with 86 per cent, and LC Ruth Lanckham (Cardiff) and LC Michael Watson (Rugby), who achieved joint first place in the mechanical course with a score of 96 per cent.

Staff on the courses – all Advanced ME Instructors – included Lt Cdr (SCC) George Wilson RNR (HQSO(MarEng)); CPO (SCC) Michael Herring (Finchley); PO(SCC) Ron Matrunola (Crawley) and Lt Cdr (SCC) Leslie King RNR (ADO(Northern Ireland)).

Cardiff are going great guns

THE gruelling Portsmouth Area Volunteer Cadet Corps (PAVCC) Field Gun competition ended with a new name on the trophy this year.

Held at HMS Collingwood's Summer Show – when the adult field gun teams compete for the prestigious Brickwoods Trophy – the crews of 19 male and female cadets aged between ten and 18 race against each other with a 7pdr field gun and limber, weighing over 900lb in total, over a distance of 170 yards and carrying out a number of 'drills'.

This year the competition was opened up to all cadet forces, and HMS Sultan took the new trophy in a time of 1m 7s.

First invited to take part back in 2006, Cardiff unit again won the Sea Cadet Corps Invitation Trophy with a total time of 1m 26s.

TS Cardiff and HMS Collingwood were due to lock horns once again at the Cardiff Armed Forces Day Field Gun competition at the end of June – which promises to be an event not for the faint-hearted.



● Cardiff units cadets in action with their field gun

New junior field gun for volunteers

THE Plymouth Royal Marines Volunteer Cadet Corps (RMVCC) has been presented with a new junior field gun.

The wooden miniature gun was donated by the Devonport Division of the HMS Ganges Association.

The Field Gun competition has long been associated with Devonport, and although the original Command Field Gun competition finished in 1999, it still remains in a junior form promoting fitness, robustness and strong team building – values that chime with those of the Royal Marines Cadets.

The Devonport Field Gun Association (DFGA) has recently started a Junior Field Gun Sport Initiative with the intent of encouraging and supporting all forms of junior field gun competition in the South West.

The DFGA is presently hand-producing wooden mini field guns and limbers with walls for use in competitions between these youth teams.

The eventual aspiration is for a Junior Field Gun league to be formed, to enable competition between both schools and youth organisations alike throughout the south west and beyond.

The guns are built by volunteers from within the association but basic materials need to be paid for – and this is where the Ganges group stepped in.

HMS Ganges was the last wooden-walled flagship of the Royal Navy before she became a training ship for boys in 1865.

After the establishment moved ashore in Shotley, Suffolk, she still retained the name.

In 1975 the last recruit joined and she closed in 1976, over 150,000 recruits having passed through her gates.

The presentation was made by the chairman of the DFGA, David Worrall and of HMS Ganges Association Devonport Division, Mike Phillips.

The field gun was received by the OC of the Plymouth RMVCC, Lt John Neale RMC.

On parade in Belgium

Sea Cadets and Royal Marines Cadets from Hastings unit march in the Victory in Europe Parade in Hastings's twin town of Oudenaarde in Belgium (left).

Hastings cadets have paraded at the event every year for 23 years, laying wreaths at the National and the British monuments.

As well as taking part in the parade, cadets and adults visit sights of interest in a bid to foster greater understanding and involvement in European affairs.

Wanderers go racing

SOME time ago *Navy News* reported on the acquisition of two Hartley Wanderer sailing dinghies by Mansfield unit.

In early May a brother-and-sister team from the unit, PO (SCC) Adam Hart and AC Lucy Hart, entered the Wanderer-class national championships, part of the wider Langstone Harbour Race Weekend in Portsmouth.

After only two weeks of preparation, the team finished third after scoring two seconds and a third place in their races.

The regatta presented challenging conditions, with strong winds at times – a particular problem for a team from Nottinghamshire, where river, lake or reservoir sailing are more familiar.

PO Hart, who works for Hartley Boats, said: "The dinghy performed extremely well and we are very lucky to have these at our unit."

"At times wind gusts hit force 7 but the boat remained sturdy and sailed very comfortably."

His sister said: "I was extremely tired after the weekend and the last two races whose scores were discarded were very hard for me."



Second gets first-hand view of summer camp

'AMAZING', 'great fun' and 'awesome' – just some of the comments Sea Scouts made during their summer camp on harbour training ship HMS Bristol in Portsmouth.

Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Jonathan Woodcock visited the youngsters (right) to see their water-based activities first-hand. "I was absolutely thrilled to meet with the Royal Navy Sea Scouts during their summer camp," said the Admiral.

"Their excitement and enthusiasm in grasping the opportunities on offer are refreshing, and all thanks to the

willing adult volunteers who give up their time to make this happen."

The summer camp is an opportunity for young people to experience life in the Royal Navy, living together in mess decks and developing teamwork, social and interpersonal skills.

A wide range of land and water activities build confidence and skills for life, with some of the Scouts progressing to gain valuable qualifications.

There are around 350 Sea Scout groups across the UK, of which 103 are part of the RN Recognised Sea Scouts Scheme.



Barnsley mark war jubilee

THE Barnsley unit band were invited to play at VE Day celebrations at the Earl of Strafford pub at Hooton Roberts.

VE Day was the public holiday celebrated on May 8 1945 to mark the formal acceptance of Nazi Germany's unconditional surrender by the Allied Forces and the end of the war in Europe.

Seven decades on, the band entertained the public and enjoyed some of the sideshows.

Meanwhile, in the market town of Penistone, a few miles west of Barnsley, cadets joined veterans for a service of celebration.

The oldest veteran was former Royal Marine Fred Houchin, who just turned 95, and was escorted by Royal Marines Cadet L/Cpl Oliver Ingham.

■ Bradford cadets finished 11th out of 22 teams in the Lord Mayor's Appeal Dragonboat Races on the canal – not bad for the only youth team in the competition.

The Bradford unit boat contained 16 rowers and a drummer – 14 cadets and three members of staff.

■ Cadets and volunteers from the unit helped paint the town yellow when they joined in the second annual Barnsley Hospital Charity Rainbow Run.

They helped set up the run, delivered paint to paint stations, water to water stations and set up the registration area.

When the race started cadets and volunteers manned the Yellow colour station and a water station, ensuring runners were well looked after.

Party time for VE Day

THE Junior Cadet section of Rushden unit organised a VE Day-style street party, which was also attended by members of Peterborough unit.

Cadets wore clothes representative of the period, and they were lucky to have entertainers on board – one in the uniform of an American major, the other as a 1940s singer who also taught some dance moves.

Food was provided through donations from Mrs B's, Waitrose and Sainsbury's – the unit's thanks go to them, and there was not much food left at the end.

During the events everyone had to deal with air raid sirens and the all clear siren – a chilling reminder of what Britons endured in the Blitz.

Sharp drill

CADETS from Weston unit made their mark on the National Drill and Piping competition.

Representing South West Area, the unit's Armed Guard came second while Guard Commander POC Alex Harper won Best Guard Commander – results that helped South West Area win the overall competition.

Winning team

A COMBINED team of cadets from Rhyd and Connah's Quay, in North Wales district, won the continuity drill section of the National Drill and Piping Competition at HMS Raleigh.

Instructors CPO (SCC) Annette Hewitson and PO (SCC) Cadet Joshua McDermott spoke of the commitment of the cadets and how proud they are of the cadet's achievement.

Déjà vu in Docklands

IN THE summer of 1971 a bar of chocolate cost 2½p, petrol was around 36p per gallon (8p per litre) and British people were still coming to terms with newly-introduced decimal currency.

There was no Internet – the concept of everyday desktop personal computing was still a dream; Apple Inc did not appear until 1976 and the IBM PC was a full decade away.

No mobiles either – the first (clunky) handheld device appeared in 1973, and Japan did not create the first basic commercial mobile network until the end of the decade.

So it was a very different world when, on August 3 1971, Princess Anne launched the Sea Cadets' new flagship, TS Royalist – named in her honour.

Fast forward nearly 44 years, and despite the breakneck pace of technological development, it was a case of *déjà vu* for the Princess Royal.

This time it was at West India Dock – in 1971 a declining industrial relic, now part of a thriving high-rise London business district – that the Princess Royal formally named and commissioned TS Royalist.

On a gloomy, rainy morning, amidst the towers of Canary Wharf, the Princess was the principal guest at a ceremony that moved the new ship one step closer to her first offshore voyage.

Having admitted to a slight sense of *déjà vu*, the Princess said she was really pleased the new ship looks so much like its predecessor.

"I was already slightly older than the age limit for a cadet when I launched the original," said the Princess Royal.

"I am delighted to be here because I really do feel for the Sea Cadet Corps to have their own flagship is fundamentally important."

The royal guest spoke of the team spirit such a ship helped to nurture, and the benefits that can be gained from working at sea – sometimes a beautiful place, but also one that can be uncomfortable.

She said it was "a real honour and a pleasure" to name the ship, after which she was given a brief tour of the £4.8m vessel, launched in Spain last December.

Around 100 cadets, representing 33 different units, from across the country attended the naming and commissioning ceremony – some were crew from power training ships TS John Jervis and TS Jack Petchey, some 30 were from a combined band



● (Above) The Princess Royal meets cadets at the South Dock of West India Docks, where the new TS Royalist was commissioned

● (Right) The Princess Royal invites JC Mia Williams to help her cut the commissioning cake, watched by Captain Sea Cadets Capt Phil Russell

and four of the six Navy Board Cadets were on duty.

Members of the Sefton Unit Glee Club entertained guests with a selection of songs before the ceremony got under way.

Guests included a stellar array of retired senior Royal Navy officers, including former First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Jock Slater, Commander-in-Chief Fleet Admiral Sir James Burnell-Nugent and Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Alan Massey.

The commissioning warrant for the new Royalist was read by Offshore Commander (SCC) Jerry Bearne RNR, and the Act of Dedication led by the new Captain Sea Cadets Capt Phil Russell.

Prayers and blessings were led by the new Royal Navy Chaplain of the Fleet, the Ven



Ian Wheatley, and by the Lord Bishop of London the Rt Rev Richard Chartres.

Southern Area Navy Board Cadet POC Charlie Abbott (Ramsgate unit) recited the Sea Cadets Prayer.

The Sea Cadets Guard of Honour and the band remained focused and smart despite the

frequent heavy showers.

Lt (SCC) Paul Barker RNR HQ Staff Officer Ceremonial, and WO (SCC) Paul Kitchen RNR, HQ Staff Officer Ceremonial.

Guests that the provision of an "absolutely fantastic new flagship" demonstrated that the charity was "investing in generations of cadets for the next 40 years."

These bookings are likely to have been made last year; the old Royalist was pretty much fully booked throughout the sailing season, and the same will apply to the new ship.

Marine Society & Sea Cadets (MSSC) CEO Martin Coles told guests that the provision of an "absolutely fantastic new flagship" demonstrated that the charity was "investing in generations of cadets for the next 40 years."

Eleven-year-old Junior Cadet Mia Williams, of Bromley unit, found out a couple of weeks in advance that, as the youngest cadet on the day, she would be helping the Princess Royal cut the commissioning cake.

"It is the culmination of a lot of hard work to raise the money to get her here."

"We are now just itching to get as many young people as we can to sea to give them the best possible experience in life."

The new Royalist is expected to start her life in the Corps this month – the first two-dozen or so Sea Cadet crew have not been specially selected, but just

● Due ceremony was observed by participating Sea Cadets and Royal Marines Cadets, despite the heavy showers that swept across London's Docklands (left)

happened to have booked an offshore voyage for that particular week (a cruise along the South Coast from her Gosport base).

These bookings are likely to have been made last year; the old Royalist was pretty much fully booked throughout the sailing season, and the same will apply to the new ship.

Representing South West Area, the unit's Armed Guard came second while Guard Commander POC Alex Harper won Best Guard Commander – results that helped South West Area win the overall competition.

During the events everyone had to deal with air raid sirens and the all clear siren – a chilling reminder of what Britons endured in the Blitz.

Another gift the Princess took with her was a name board from the old Royalist, presented to her on departure by South West Area Navy Board Cadet POC Ashley Freeman, of Sutton Coldfield unit.

The second name board is installed on the new Royalist.





● The BRNC squad and training staff who made the trip to the US Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland

BRNC deliver winning lesson Stateside

BRITANNIA Royal Naval College took a squad of 32 **rugby** players and support staff to the US Naval Academy in Annapolis.

First up was the chance to see the Annapolis 1st XV beat Clemson University in a cup match which meant the BRNC players would be playing a combination of their second and third squads during their tour.

BRNC's first match against a local Baltimore side was cancelled after the

pitch was flooded. The visitors took the opportunity to train alongside the Annapolis team.

Rugby training was followed by an outing on the YPs. These could be described as P2000s on steroids and the academy has many of them for training purposes. They can berth roughly 25 midshipmen and regularly sail up to Baltimore and other areas around the Chesapeake Bay.

Finally BRNC got to play a rugby

match. In order to give everyone on tour a good run out, the match was to be played in four 20-minute quarters and with rolling substitutes.

Annapolis started well making gains into the BRNC half with powerful runs, their team no smaller than their 1st XV, but BRNC defended well.

Team captain Oliver Tooze-Hobson scored a try in the corner. Silly penalties allowed Annapolis to get back into the game and they responded with a try

through their forwards near the posts, making the score 5-7 after 20 minutes.

In the third quarter, a 13-man maul, to which the opposition had no answer, resulted in a try for Rhodri Leyshon, putting the score at 10-7.

However the opposition responded well again and it wasn't long before one of their massive centres ran through a gap in the line and scored under the posts. Greg Stewart at fly half was running the game well and Joe Burton

at No.8 was carrying the ball well and wearing down their defence so BRNC were confident of turning things around.

Some good hands down the left hand side made good ground and, after a few forward carries for positive yards, David Hewitson went over in the corner for BRNC to retake the lead at 15-14.

With ten minutes left BRNC won a penalty in kickable range which Chris Gray slotted to make the final score 18-14.

Lucky 13 in Livorno

THE newly-established BRNC Dartmouth **sailing** team won silver at the World Naval Academy Championships.

More than 20 nations, including Brazil, Chile, Canada, Germany, and Serbia, took part in the 32nd championships held in Livorno, Italy.

The championships saw Trident 16 dinghies, provided by the Italian Naval Academy, allocated at random during the opening ceremony. Thankfully boat 13 did not prove too unlucky for the Dartmouth team.

Team BRNC consisted of, skipper George Wilmot, Fiona Cook and Chris Pascoe, all within their first few months of Initial Officer Training.

The team optimised the pre-regatta training period and were put through their paces by BRNC Sailing Officer and coach Lt Darren Roach.

The racing began with very light winds, meaning many boats struggled to work their way around the course.

The BRNC team, however, stayed focused and scored some

good early results, with the UAE being the main competition on the first day.

The following day brought blustery and exhilarating conditions with even larger waves and gusts of up to 28kts.

BRNC led once more, but after several capsizes among the fleet, the race officer was forced to abandon racing for the day.

With Saturday also achieving no race results the pressure was piled on for the last day of racing.

Sunday was characterised by some very close racing between the BRNC, Italy and the UAE Officer Cadets.

This included team racing tactics played by the Italians against the heavily outnumbered BRNC team.

On completion of racing, BRNC were on winning points, however, the close racing had resulted in protests between some of the teams.

After a two-hour protest hearing, BRNC received a controversial disqualification from the penultimate race, dropping them into second place overall. This left Italy to take gold and the UAE team bronze.



● BRNC's Lt Darren Roach with team Fiona Cook, George Wilmot and Chris Pascoe

Scenic time for sailors

SAILORS from HMS Portland enjoyed some **kayaking** on the fjords during a visit to Bergen.

Nærøyfjord Fjord was the beautiful setting for a bit of down time in between exercises.

Funded by contributions from the Sports Lottery, Adventurous Training Fund and personal contributions, it ensured that 28 personnel from the ship enjoyed the experience over a three-day period.

Hosted by Nordic Ventures the groups made their way 12 miles under paddle before stopping for lunch by an idyllic waterfall.

Event organiser, HMS Portland's LPT 'OB' O'Brien said: "I have never witnessed kayaking in such a beautiful place."

"The breath-taking views made this an unforgettable experience and the BBQ lunch that was knocked up by our Kiwi instructors was well received."

The Type 23 is due back in her home port of Plymouth in the summer for a period of leave and maintenance.

Team on top of the world

THE Royal Navy Squash Rackets Association visited Kuala Lumpur and Penang in Malaysia to play seven matches in ten days.

Fourteen players from the U25, seniors, veterans and women's squads representing all parts of the Service, including a Phase 2 trainee and a member of the RNR, enjoyed fixtures against local squash clubs, academy teams, the national youth team and the Malaysian Navy.

The first fixture was against the Royal Lake Club, which included some formidable players with an ex-Malaysian No.1 and two Malaysian princes.

One of the tour highlights was playing the National Youth team. Special mention goes to Cpl Pat McHugh who literally left blood sweat and tears on the court in his narrow 3-2 loss.

The final match of the tour was against the Royal Malaysian Navy who narrowly defeated a very weary RN side. Man of the match was 19-year-old ETME Stevie Bingham (HMS Diamond) who produced the



● The RN squash team on the roof of the British High Commission in Kuala Lumpur during their ten-day visit to Malaysia

match of his life in temperatures over 34°C. Other memorable moments included watching the Malaysian U10 Champion narrowly lose a gruelling five-set match against Lt Cdr Robin Young, 61.

The players were: Lt Cdr

Young, Cpl McHugh, Lt Danielle Welch, Lt Phil Clark, AET Conrad Young, PO Smith, Lt John Stephenson, Cdr Stephen Shaw, Cdr Mardlin, Lt Andy Rodgers, C/Sgt Hall, WO2 Mansey RM, ET(ME) Bingham and AB Sam Smith.

A 24-HOUR indoor rowing event at HMS Sultan ended in success as members of the Royal Navy's Indoor Rowing Team and Sub7 Indoor Rowing Club (Sub7) combined in an attempt to break British and World Indoor Rowing records.

Taking on the Concept2 challenge the 29 participants aimed to row over 392,385 metres within 24 hours to claim the British and World records.

Rotating at one-minute intervals, the team of both male and female rowers got off to a good start.

After starting at midday Saturday the team went into the evening ahead of the predicted pace of 1:40 pace per 500m splits; the actual pace was 1:34.2 per 500m.

Working through the night, as tiredness started to kick in the team continued to progress well.

The rowers continued to press towards their goal achieving a distance of 213,489 at the mid point of the event.

After rowing for 21 hours

the team reached the 392,385 to equal the British and World records.



● Richard Campos helps the team cross the finish line

although a significant distance was added to the total I still think the record could be beaten again. Nevertheless, it was a great way to finish the season."

Members of the Royal Navy Indoor Rowing team involved were: Lt Cdr Jim Hyde (HMS Argyll), Lt Stu Moss (HMS Vengeance), CPO Collin Leiba (MCTA), PO Richie Galpin (HMS Sultan), and AET Emily Newton (HMS Sultan).



● Lt Cdr Clark and Skye

No limits for Skye in race for title

A ROYAL Navy Officer from HMS Collingwood has successfully retained his title after winning the National CaniX Championship with his dog.

Lt Cdr Howard Clark and his German shorthaired pointer Skye competed in the CaniX Championship this season and went on to win the National CaniX Championship for Master Male for the second year running.

CaniX or Canicross is cross-country running with a dog and the CaniX Championship is a series of 14 events held in country parks across the UK.

Runners and their dogs start individually at timed intervals.

Howard said: "This sport is great fun and thoroughly rewarding. Dogs love to chase and run with a pack and Skye certainly excels at this."

"This sport has helped to develop her into a more confident dog, has strengthened our bond and trust and, keeps me fit and motivated."

"We get to travel and compete at some of the most scenic locations across the UK. It's really pleasing that an event designed by my wife and I was introduced at Queen Elizabeth Country Park this year and is now a regular fixture of the CaniX Championship."

Howard is now looking forward to representing Great Britain at the European Championships in Scotland later this year competing against Europe's top athletes (human and dog).

For details visit <http://www.caniX.co.uk/> or join Portsmouth Canicross on Facebook.

Nine join triathlon

HYDE Park saw thousands of triathletes – including six women and three men from the Royal Navy Triathlon Association – take part in the ITU Vitality World Triathlon.

The women, who were kicking off Women's Sports Week 2015, enjoyed racing around the Olympic Triathlon venue, including the Serpentine.

Many were able to watch the Brownlee brothers and the incredible Gwen Jorgensen race on the Sunday after their hard work and effort in their races.

For more details about the Royal Navy Triathlon association, please visit the RN DEV website/portal and for all women, please look out for the women-only event at Eton Dorney on Sunday July 12.

Please contact one of the team coaches or Lt Cdr Sam Truelove, 9621 82221 or email NavyPolNsEngment3@mod.uk

■ The RN Triathlon team won the TriClub Division II ranking at the Staffordshire Ironman.

Team captain Cpl Aled Jones came first in his age group and 11th overall.

Just not cricket for Navy

ROYAL Navy players had to settle for the role of spectators at the Inter-Services T20 cricket championship at Lord's.

First up were reigning champions the Army against the Senior Service. The Navy batted first and ended on 104 all out. The Army made short work of their target and won with five overs to spare.

The second game saw the RAF go into bat first against the RN and with, Cessford scoring 59, they recorded a formidable 212 for eight.

It proved too much for the RN as they finished on 148 for eight.

It left the RAF and the Army to vie for the title in the final match.

The RAF batted first and scored 119 for seven.

The Army stepped up to bat and after a nail-biting few overs where it looked like the RAF might be able to hold them in check, they went on to win the match and the Inter-Services title with an over to spare.



● Action from the match between the Royal Navy and the RAF at Lord's

Picture: Sgt Ross Tilly RAF

Players' tribute to fallen

ROYAL Navy sailors from a South West warship, fresh from a major illegal drugs haul operation, took part in a WW1 memorial rugby match to raise money for charity.

HMS Somerset's rugby team took part in the 2nd Alfred Cox Cup, playing against Ide RFC, to raise money for the Royal British Legion and remember those that died in the conflict.

Ide RFC reformed last year, more than 100 years since they last played, to raise money for the Royal British Legion.

The Ide team's shirts bear the names of those players who died in battle and some of today's players have a direct link to the 1907/08 team.

The Alfred Cox Cup, is named after Royal Navy CPO Alfred Cox, who was one of the original Ide RFC players who died in WW1.

Although the conditions were far from the early summer evening that all had hoped for, the wind and showers did little to dampen the spirit of the players who in finest Naval tradition gave their all in the face of a strong and well-drilled opposition.

The contest played by an inexperienced HMS Somerset team was hard fought but good humoured, with the final score being very much secondary to raising money, awareness and rekindling old relations.

LS Evans, 29, said: "Seeing the names of the old players who died on the shirt really made you think. I hope this game continues for many years."

Ide RFC, originally from the village of Ide, disbanded after only two seasons in 1908 however after a photo of the team was spotted in a pub inspired its reformation as a Barbarians team where players from across the region are invited to play and willingly offer their services.

The Just Giving site (<https://www.justgiving.com/iderfc>) will remain open for people to show their support.

Senior rate nets title

WO1 Tim Broughton netted the Fleet Air Arm Cup at the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Angling Association's 24-hour Fenwood Mere Match.

The RNRMAA Game Section provides coaching or taster days throughout the year, offering complete novices to competent anglers a great day out and it is available to all serving RN and RM personnel.

For further information please refer to 2015DIN10-023 or contact carp-secretary@rnandrmaa.org.uk, coarse-secretary@rnandrmaa.org.uk, leslie.sutherland893@mod.uk, sea-secretary@rnandrmaa.org.uk

Diary dates:
 Jul 30: Coarse Carp coaching, Southwick Park; Jul 31-Aug 2: Coarse Carp RNRMAA Inter-Region Round 5, Southwick Park; Aug 5: Game novice coaching, Anglian Water (TBC); Aug 20: Coarse carp coaching, Sandhurst; Aug 21-23: Coarse carp RNRMAA Inter-Region Round 6, Sandhurst, Yateley; Sept 1: Game, Pre-AMFC 5 coaching and Sept 2: Game AMFC 5, both at Rutland Water; Sept 3: Game RN and Army v England Fly Fishers, Pitsford Water; Sept 7: Coarse RNRMAA Inter-Region Round 3, Viaduct, Campbell Lake; Sept 10: Coarse Carp coaching, Willow Park, Ash Vale, Aldershot; Sept 11-13: Coarse Carp, RNRMAA Carp Championships, Willow Park; Sept 12: Coarse Division 2 National, River Trent, Newark-Nottingham; Sept 13-15: Game Inter-Services coaching, Rutland Water; Sept 16: Game novice coaching, Rutland Water.

Ambush forced to share the spoils



● Action from the match

SUBMARINERS from Faslane-based HMS Ambush took on Helensburgh Amateur Football Club, marking a growing affiliation between the Astute-class submarine and the local side.

The teams played an inaugural friendly match with HMS Ambush team captain, LET Dan O'Riorden, presenting Helensburgh AFC with a ship's crest prior to kick-off.

A high-tempo opening spell followed with Helensburgh taking an early lead after some indecision in Ambush's defence allowed Helensburgh's striker to rifle a low shot into the bottom corner after a deflection.

Helensburgh AFC's early advantage was soon extended as they doubled their lead within 15 minutes.

However, the shock of going 2-0 down in the first 15 minutes spurred HMS Ambush's team into action and the next three minutes saw the Faslane side level the score thanks to Ambush striker ET Luke McLoughlin.

With the score tied, both sides

pursued their chances with a combination of strong defending and excellent goal keeping from Helensburgh thwarting Ambush's attacks.

The third goal finally arrived on the stroke of half-time as ET Jake McGovern broke into the box only to be brought down as he attempted to shoot, leaving the referee no option but to award a penalty. McGovern coolly stepped up to score giving Ambush a 3-2 lead at half-time.

The second half was a cagier affair, with few chances at either end. As the match reached the last five minutes it looked as though Ambush would retain their lead. However, with minutes to go Helensburgh won the ball back and launched a fast counter-attack.

Despite a fine initial save from Ambush's keeper, LC Graham Van Marle, Helensburgh's striker pounced on the rebound to level the score at 3-3 – a fitting end to the friendly.

The teams are looking forward to the return fixture later this year.



Sight for soar eyes

SAILORS from across the Royal Navy took to Solent skies for a week of adventurous training courtesy of Portsmouth Naval Gliding Club.

From able seamen to commanders, beginners to experienced pilots, the group came together to learn or hone their skills in the skies above Lee-on-the-Solent.

One of three Naval Gliding Clubs, the Portsmouth branch ran the week of AT to introduce rookies to their sport as well as developing the existing skills of pilots, while pushing comfort zones and overcoming new challenges.

The potential pilots (figuratively) hit the ground running – and were in the air after a brief introduction to their aircraft.

After their inaugural take-off pilots were taking charge of their gliders during the air tow, moving on to flying circuits and finally landing.

Leading Photographer Joel Rouse – who normally serves with the very-ground-based 42 Commando – said: "It has been a fantastic opportunity to learn something new, challenging and exhilarating. I even had the opportunity for some aerobatics, including a loop the loop!"

Having attended the course, personnel automatically receive an annual membership to the Portsmouth club – which can be transferred to either Culdrose or Yeovilton.

The club isn't just about flying as there's a social side with facilities such as a club house and bar.

"Gliding is an opportunity for all Service personnel to participate – use it or lose it," said instructor Richard Croker.

To learn more about gliding in the Portsmouth area, he can be contacted on 93843 2794 or visit www.pnfc.co.uk

Pictures: Paul Harley Photography



● Sailors who tried their hand at gliding

Double delight for Marine at tough trophy race Man of the moment

ROYAL Marine C/Sgt Bill Callister roars around the track at the Isle of Man TT.

It was the Manxman's third time at the world-famous event – and it proved his most successful as he secured two trophies.

He set out wishing to win a bronze replica of the TT trophy – to be successful you must complete a lap of the 37-mile course at an average speed in excess of 120mph.

C/Sgt Callister, who qualified to race in both the superbike and superstock classes, started in 63rd place in the superbike and finished at 38th. His best lap speed was 118.223mph.

Starting from 59th place in the superstock, he again finished in 38th position but this time a lap speed of 121.376mph earned him the coveted cup.

The former Royal Navy and Royal Marines Road Race Champion then competed in the Pokerstars Senior TT, viewed as the toughest motorcycle race in the world over the longest course.

He stormed away from the start, putting in a first lap of 120.110mph and finishing with a lap of 121.313mph to earn another bronze replica.

■ The 2015 GB Racing Military Inter-Service Championship got under way at Brands Hatch and saw Sgt Lee Howarth top the individual standing.

C/Sgt Callister had a steady but safe three races in the furious GP1 on his 1,000cc Fireblade, securing 48 points while Stevie Cormack saved his weekend with a decent showing of 37 points.

Round two took place at Donington Park where a rain shower prior to qualifying saw team captain Stevie Elliot have his first-ever high side.

His weekend didn't get much better with a wheel-bearing failure in the final race.

Team Navy had five riders taking part, with Mne Danny Marsden returning on a Golden Era R6. Mne Ben Hollingsworth, on a Golden Era Ducati 996, and Sgt Dave White on another Golden Era R6, were both newcomers.

Ali Wright had a good start to the weekend but a snapped chain brought his racing to a premature end.

■ The 2015 Inter-Service MX Championships kicked off with Chris Booth leading the charge for the Navy's Fatcats. However, it was Adam Figgins who brought home the points after Booth had a spectacular crash.

Matt Readman clawed back some points after a spill in race one. He was hot on the tail of Figgins and managed to beat him in race two.



● C/Sgt Callister, right, in hot pursuit during the Isle of Man TT

Picture: Mann Motorsports.co.uk



● The RN's MX team in action, and right, a competitor at the karting competition



● A competitor at the karting competition

Round two took place at Preston Docks and it was down to Figgins, who secured 17 points for the team championship in the final race.

■ The RNRN Off-Road Team travelled to Swynnerton Training Area in Staffordshire for the first round of the 2015 Inter-Service Off-Road Navigation Championships.

The team had two vehicles taking part and ended the weekend in second and third place.

The second round took place at Millbrook Proving Grounds near Milton Keynes. Three cars made up the team with PO Andrew Richman and LAET Rory Lowther, both from 815 NAS, in

Andrew's 1965 2a series Land Rover; CPO Trevor Harmer and LAET Patrick Beckett, both from 848 NAS, in a Range Rover and Les Howard and Lt Matt McQuaid, of HMS Ocean, in a Land Cruiser.

They were joined by 34 other vehicles for the event, which consisted of seven phases; the first was a safari, following a map around Millbrook's Alpine Pass.

The second phase was a driver's trial, involving a series of gates placed around one of Millbrook's vehicle testing areas designed to test the drivers' skill in negotiating various obstacles without hitting any gates and without stopping. This led to the navigation phase, involving

copying several traces onto maps and aerial pictures and following the route.

Finally before lunch was the orienteer, navigating to punches dotted all over Millbrook to stamp a time card.

After lunch it was straight into the sequential, where letterboards were marked on the map and had to be visited and recorded. This led into the aerial challenge before the last phase, another short safari.

Howard/McQuaid finished fourth overall, Harmer/Beckett came third and Richman/Lowther finished first. It was the best result the team has achieved since its formation in 2012. The result also places the RN at the top of the Inter-Service Championship with four rounds to go.

■ Team Navy won the first round of the Armed Forces Race Challenge at Silverstone. Three racers, team captain Lt Cdr Richie Scott, CPOET(ME) Steve Hutchins and POAET Sebastian Unwin, finished the weekend top of the pile.

■ The 2015 Inter-Service Karting Championship kicked off at the Three Sisters Race Circuit at Wigan with the Navy team qualifying in 18th place out of 37. The team were in 25th place after the last driver changeover, leaving LAET Day to bring the kart home in 11th place overall.



● AET Daniel Hinder

Hot-shot's cup haul

A YOUNG Air Engineering Technician has discovered a winning way on the rifle range, which has scooped him a large haul of cups and trophies at the recent Naval Air Command Operational Shooting Competition (NACOSC).

AET Daniel Hinder, who normally maintains Merlin helicopters on 829 NAS, at RNAS Culdrose, is rightly proud of his first-time achievement.

Moreover, it was even more significant as he has only ever fired a rifle once before, whilst at HMS Raleigh before joining the Culdrose shooting team.

"My mum would never let me have a gun as a kid," said Daniel. "I'd fired a rifle during training, but it was a simple test at 25 metres with 25 rounds. I'm absolutely gobsmacked. I've got this hidden talent."

The competition, held annually at Bisley ranges, Pirbright Barracks in Surrey, is between Naval Air Command (NAC) Teams from Culdrose and Yeovilton and representatives from the Royal Naval Reserve Air Branch.

Daniel added: "Having won almost everything at this event, I am looking to compete for the Queen's Medal, which is the highest accolade for a Naval shooter."

Trophy delight

THE Royal Navy and Royal Marines Basketball Association's women's team took the Inter-Services trophy for the first time.

The team beat the Army 43-35 and went on to face the RAF, demolishing them 66-23.

Former GB player NA Harriet Yea, of HMS Bulwark, was awarded the most valuable player title.

The under-23 side took on the Army and beat them by more than 20 points but lost the final match as the RAF took the title.

The association's seniors were unable to secure any wins at the Inter-Services, which took place at RAF Cosford.



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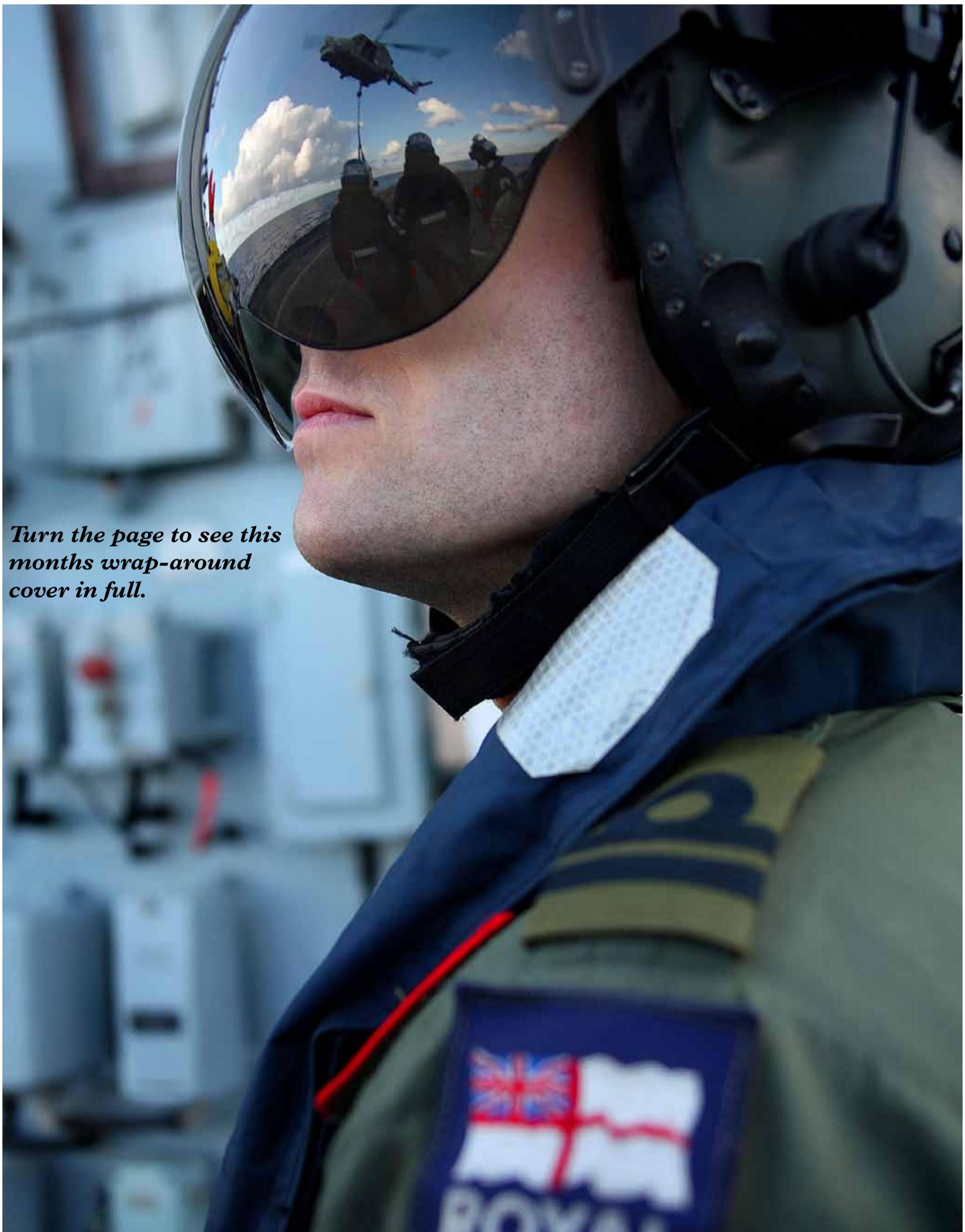
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NAVY NEWS

JULY 2015

KNIGHT VISION

● ROYAL Navy pilot Cdr Ian Tidball manoeuvres his F-35B ahead of a hot-pit refuel at Edwards Air Force Base in California, where 17(R) Squadron – known as the Black Knights – are about to begin operational testing of the strike fighter destined to fly from the Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers. See pages 3, 4, 5 and 6.
Picture: LA(Phot) Keith Morgan



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